An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur'an vol. 17

An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur'an vol. 17

Sayyid Kamal Faqih Imani

Translated by
Sayyid Abbas Sadr-'ameli

Al-Islam.org

Sub Title:
From Surah al-Jathiyah (45) to Surah al-Hadid (57)

Publisher(s):

Imam Ali Foundation [1]

An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur'an vol. 17
From Surah al-Jathiyah (45) to Surah al-Hadid (57)
The light of Islam has enlightened and continuing to enlighten every corner in the world and seekers of truth have closely associated to the Holy Quran which carries the Word of Allah (SWT) to humanity. With increasing focus and attention to the Holy Quran, efforts has been done to provide a pure, correct and accurate translation of this divine book. But sometimes it is difficult for the readers to understand all of the apparent and hidden meanings and it is the duty of every Muslim, man or woman, to read, understand and contemplate on the Holy Qur'an according to his own capacity. Hence, the need for proper explanation becomes obvious and necessary. The book titled, "An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur'an" compiled by a group of Muslim scholars, under the direction of Ayatullah Allamah Al-Hajj Sayyid Kamal Faqih Imani is a valuable effort which presents a thorough commentary on the Quran in 20 volumes made available to the reader.

Get PDF [2] Get EPUB [3] Get MOBI [4]

Translator(s):

Sayyid Abbas Sadr-'ameli [5]

Topic Tags:

Qur'anic Exegesis (Tafsir) [6]

Introduction

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

"Verily the Qur'an doth guide to that which is most right (or stable) (to run societies), and giveth the glad tidings to the Believers who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a magnificent reward" 1.

"We have sent down to thee the book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad tidings to Muslims" [2].

"When those come to thee who believe **in** ***Our Signs, say: 'Peace be on you: Your Lord hath inscribed for Himself*** **(*****the rule on Mercy; verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented, and amended*** **(*****his conduct*****),** ***Lo! He is oft-forgiving, Most Merciful"*** [3].

The light of Islam is illuminating hearts of individuals in nearly all parts of the world, in spite of heavy barriers and careful controls and religious interrogation exerted by not only many governments of non-Muslim nations, but also in some Muslim countries, against their believing people, especially during the years after the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

The effective influence of the light of the truth together with the speed in the movement of the Age has brought forth a more vital exchange of thought and religious ideology in connection with the Holy Qur'an.

In regard to this, we refer to what the Messenger of Allah (S) has said about it:

When afflictions surround you like the dark night refer to the Qur'an, because, it is an Intercessor whose intercession is accepted. It reports the evils (*of people*) *which will be confirmed. It leads the person to Heaven who puts it in front of himself* (*follows it*)*; and he who puts it behind himself* (*neglects it*) *will be driven to Hell.*

This very Qur'an is the best guide to the best ways. It is a Book in *which there are useful explanations, statements and gaining* (*of goals*)*. It is the Separator* (*of right and wrong*)*.* [4]

Obviously, those people whose language is not Arabic can refer to the Holy Book in English, because this is an international language and it is possible for all nations with any native language, to read and understand it in English. As far as we know, there are more than 50 different English translations of Qur'an available in Iran alone, and probably others exist in libraries (and homes) throughout the world.

This makes it easy for the lovers of truth to obtain the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and Islamic ideology, through the medium of English, which formerly was acquired directly by the Arabic and Persian languages.

But, a fact should be mentioned here that not all of the words of Allah are easily understood by ordinary people and need explanatory commentary, i.e. 'Tafsir'.

Alongside this path, there are some problems that those eager to learn the Qur'anic truth should know and be careful of. Hence, we deal here with some of the difficulties we were involved in and recognized when we were preparing this endeavour; the fruit of our humble labour of more than three years, a translation of the commentary of over one section (of the 30 sections) of the Holy Qur'an from different commentary sources.

The work is based upon popular commentaries accepted by Muslim scholars. We consulted other books and present living scholars, learned in the Qur'anic Sciences for our work to produce this commentary in a simple standard of English easily understood by the laymen.

The style of writing here is a mixture of British–English and American–English, understandable for all the readers; even for those acquainted with only one of them. However, excuse us for using interchangeable spellings. If both are used, from time to time, they are acceptable; for example, honour and honor.

Not All English Versions of Quran Are Acceptable

Some Western translators of the Holy Qur'an; not all of them, and some producers of literature on Islam in the English language, are the anti–Muslim elements which are busy in distorting the facts about the faith to create disruption in Islamic ideology.

These hostile minds have attempted to black–list the Holy Prophet (S) and the religion of Islam, through their purposeful and subtle mis–translations, mis–interpretations, mis–representations and distortion of the facts.

The distortion and the misinterpretations are so skilfully decorated in linguistic excellence and delusive logic that the blind lovers of the English language, who are hardly or even totally unaware of the actual Qur'anic factors of their own faith, get caught up in the falsehood tempered with eloquence and they swallow the 'sugar–coated poisonous pills of deceit' allowing themselves to become duly conditioned to serve the purpose of the publications of the hostile camps.

The current standing of Evil has always been against the Truth in the history of man, even before written history, when the sons of Adam came into existence.

When these antagonistic elements have successfully extended their active influence upon our own religion, ideology and social tradition, we are also duty bound to Allah, His Final Word (the Holy Qur'an), the Faith, and to Islam, to do our best to present to every sincere seeker of Truth, a selection of a translation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an of the original Arabic text, and the 'Tafsir' (commentary) of them.

By the way, we believe that it is the essential belief of 'Shi'a' that the present Qur'an, that which is in our hands today, is the Holy Book of Allah, revealed to the holy Prophet Muhammad (S), as arranged and compiled during his lifetime and read out to him and it contains nothing less or more than what was revealed.

And it should be noted that,

"Nay, but it is a Glorious Qur'an, (inscribed) in a tablet preserved."[5]**,**

whose present arrangement is the order in which the various verses were sorted and arranged at the

command of the Holy Prophet (S), himself.

This is the uncorrupted or undisturbed Word of *Allah,* the preservation of which has been guaranteed by *Allah,* Himself:

"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)" 6.

Furthermore, the English translations, along with the Arabic text of the verses, in this book, are selected from different translations of English versions of the Holy Qur'an, (whose names are listed at the end of the book under the title of **'References'**) which are from the best available sources in which some better styles and more proper meanings are employed. The translator and editor did their best to preserve this divine message and in conveying the Qur'anic facts in English.

In a few instances this writer, the translator, changed a word of those existing translations to a better one, from the existing material which was employed in this work.

What is a 'Commentary'?

A pure, correct, accurate translation of the Qur'an is necessary, but sometimes it is difficult for the readers to understand all of the apparent and hidden meanings and it is the duty of every Muslim, man or woman to read, understand and contemplate on the Holy Qur'an according to his own capacity:

"...read you, therefore, of the Qur'an as much as may be easy for you.." 7.

This reading has to be done not only with the tongue, voice and eyes; a mere recitation, but, also, with the best light that our intellect can supply, and even more, with the truest and purest light which our heart and conscience give us.

However, it is not always possible to fully understand the Holy Book as *Allah* says:

"That is indeed a Qur'an most honourable,"Which none shall touch but those who are purified" 8.

Thus, some additional information is needed. For example, it is sometimes necessary, for understanding the text, to refer to the particular occasion for the revelation of a particular verse; or to know the philological changes of a word used at the time of revelation or before it and the meaning that it has in Arabic, today.

Or the alphabetical symbols which evidently and undoubtedly are secrets, and especially the ambiguous /mutashabihat/; the knowledge of which has been announced to be with the /rasixuna fil 'ilm/; those deeply established in knowledge.

They are some things that only 'the particular ones, the sinless ones', besides the Prophet (S), himself,

viz, Ahlul-Bait, knew with all the Qur'anic facts and talked about them in their traditions and narrations (as He says:

"And whom We had taught knowledge from Our own Presence"[9].

For instance, the Apostle, himself, answered the questions which used to be asked by people as to the meaning of certain words in the verses revealed, or details of certain historical or spiritual matters on which they sought more enlightenment. These answers and explanations or in other words, the commentaries were gathered by some Companions /ashab/ and were afterward written down which are called 'Hadith' or 'traditions'.

Of course, the holy Prophet (S) had openly declared in Hadith-uth- Thaqalayn that the Qur'an is with the Ahlul-Bait, and to avoid going astray, the Muslims should be attached to these two. Later, the Ahlul-Bait's explanations and narrations, were added to them and together with the effect of expert religious scholars, in the past and present, established 'Exegesis' (explanation of Qur'an) which became a science in itself and was called 'Tafsir', commentary.

'Commentary' shows how every verse, or group of verses, were revealed to the holy Prophet (S) on a particular occasion, but which also has a general meaning. The particular occasion and the particular people concerned have passed away, but the general meaning and its application remain true for all time.

This is also one of the miracles of the Qur'an that with the help of 'commentary' it is always open and it is always new for those new generations to come.

The Current Commentary

As was mentioned earlier, the light of Islam is enlightening every corner in the world and seekers of truth, having referred to the translations of the Holy Qur'an, find that they need 'Tafsir', (commentary).

Some of them, Shi'a believers in particular have been led to this Center; Imam Ali (a) Library, requesting a clear, concise English Tafsir; 'a commentary of the Holy Qur'an'.

From the beginning of Islam until today (although many times the Holy Qur'an has been translated into English and a few of them are published with brief, detailed commentary, as footnotes, there has rarely been, as far as we know, a fairly complete commentary in English sufficient for them to find their answers. So the decision was made to supply this commentary.

Ayatullah Mujahed Al-Hajj, Allamah Sayyid Kamal Faqhih Imani, the founder and responsible party of this Islamic Scientific Research Center, approached us and reported the situation to scholars and appropriate research societies.

Then 12 people, who had varying nationalities and educational backgrounds, especially from the point of the English language and Islamic Theology, gathered. In their first gathering, which was held on 28th Safar, 1412 (1370 H. / 1991), they concluded that the commentary of the whole Qur'an which they intended to supply in English, would take many years to produce.

In order to quench the thirst of the lovers of Truth who had demanded it again and again, they decided to supply the commentary of the last section of the Qur'an, as a sample, and after its publication and receiving constructive comments by the readers and with a better skillfulness of the ones involved, the translation of the commentary would begin from the beginning of the Holy Qur'an.

Therefore, they thought it would be better that the sample, entitled **'An Enlightening Commentary Into the Light of the Holy Qur'an',** begin with Surah Insan, the end of the 29th Section, because the Qur'an was revealed for the improvement of Man and this Surah is about Man and his creation from a lowly life-germ which can develop unto the highest point where no other creature can ascend.

But, after several weeks the number of us dwindled to a handful and after some months, until the present, we remain two people; the translator and the editor. During this period of more than three years, a few people have tried their hands at this task to have a share in the translation, but, for different reasons, they were not successful.

However, we are completely grateful for their efforts and extend our thanks for their attempts, as well as to those who had any involvement in this work.

Attributes Needed for Working on This Kind of Commentary

This endeavour needed not only the knowledge and skillfulness in the English language, but also the knowledge of Arabic, and Islamic science and culture, because Tafsir is an attempt to analyze and explain the meaning of verses in the Holy Qur'an.

Moreover, Allah, Himself, says:

"We have sent down to thee the book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims"[10].

Then, it needs that those involved know a little bit about almost all sciences and knowledge that human beings are concerned with when working with the commentary. Also, the phonetic sound systems of the two languages, English and Arabic, are different. Therefore, when an Arabic word from the Qur'an is mentioned in the English text, it is shown with the phonetic alphabet and in its special phonetical sign, i.e.: / /, to avoid using 'Arabic script' in the book, as far as possible.

A transliteration table of the Arabic letters and sounds and the corresponding phonetic signs, applied in this book, is given at the beginning of the book.

The Problems in Translating

We tried to avoid mixing up our own personal theories and conclusions with the interpretation of the text itself. With the help of Allah, we did our best; at times asking for guidance from some learned religious men (Ruhaniyan), and used all the knowledge and experience we possessed in the service of the Holy Qur'an for its commentary, hoping that *Allah* accepts it.

The nature of this sort of endeavour is so that, in the course of translation, some difficulties arise from various causes.

For instance, cultures in the Arabic language and English language are different so that some of the words like /amrun bayn al amrayn/ in the case of fatalism and freewill are nearly impossible to translate into English, because of the difference in the concept in English literature; or the meaning of a word like 'prostration', in English, is rather different with what /sajdah/ exactly means in Arabic.

In such cases, we selected the meaning of the words from among what the earlier commentators and phililogists used and where they were not unanimous, we also used the ideas of new writers, who had reasonable advantages in their interpretations, when the senses adopted with the commentary sources that we were taking and translating materials from. Explanations, of course are always helpful which we took benefit from, too.

It is noteworthy that there are some circumstances in the text, of the commentary, in which a verse or verses of Qur'an from other Suras rather than the Surah under discussion are mentioned as evidence or, thereby, for strengthening the idea.

The text of these verses and also the traditions and narrations from the holy Prophet or Ahlul-Bait (a) is printed in bolder type than the running commentary in order to distinguish, at a glance, the substance from the shadow. Also, the mentioned verses are generally taken from A. Yusuf Ali's translation.

It Was Only By His Merciful Will!

Translators Note

Both the editor and the translator have interesting factual stories to tell of how the way of this endeavour was paved by Providence and how they were divinely led to be absorbed into this task, Alhamdulillah. A few words given here in this regard are not to be misunderstood as a display of vanity for any peculiar distinction; for there is none.

It is purely to attract the attention of the readers to a living instance of the Providential implementation of the divine plan and how man drifts to his assignment and how matters are automatically manipulated, though, they seem yet only to be circumstantial.

"He said: Our Lord is He Who gave to each (***created***) ***thing its form and nature and further gave*** (***it***) ***guidance"***[11].

For example, once, on a night, the writer of these lines, the translator, had seen in a dream that the Holy Qur'an, was placed, honourably, on a high position, wide open, high above a very great crowd of people amongst whom he was standing, watching. The full name of his was clearly written in the midst of the writings on the right page of it with magnificent bold letters.

The dream was obviously a good one, but it did not mean vividly to him at that time.

It was four years before he found out, in the course of translating the commentary of verses 11-16 from Surah 'Abasa No. 80, both the meaning of that dream and the cause of later changes in his career of twenty years, as a manager of a profitable Foreign Language Center, thanks to Allah.

It is always true what the Qur'an says:

"You will not unless Allah wills, surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise"[12].

By His graceful arrangement this writer was separated from his almost material gains, of this fleeting world, to be set toward the assured, perfect, pure, spiritual rewards of the next, everlasting world from Him, Allah willing, when he began translating the commentary of the Qur'an and entered this great Divine Ocean of light, he found out that from earlier times such a success had been appointed and bestowed to him by Allah.

Therefore, all changes and graceful arrangements directly are from Him and it was His helpful Will that planned His graceful design and showered the ability and insight upon us to lead us to the present point. We are eagerly in hopes that He will help us and guide us in all cases to complete the task successfully so that He accepts it from us.

Editor's Note

In my case, it is a fact that only by the grace of Allah have I come to be at the helm working, side-by-side with the translator, on this commentary of the Holy Qur'an. Editing and checking this translation of '**An Enlightening commentary into the Light of the Holy Quran**' has been a most important and rewarding experience for me.

To be of value in this work several things were necessary; my mother tongue, English, was almost at the top of the list. Then, having the ability to use a computer and printer, which involved me having to learn and use a Farsi program named Zarnegar, produced in Tehran, Iran, I was able to make use of the wonderful array of fonts it contains; necessary to type the Arabic and English languages.

Next, living in Iran, for four years, has made it possible for me to become acquainted with the native

language and customs. However, the greatest asset, of all, is that I am a Shi'a Muslim woman.

It is fifteen (15) years from now, that in America, I became enlightened to the existence of the Holy Qur'an and accepted it as a better way of life. Over this period of time it has put me in touch with the purity of the religion and the logical answers to the religious questions I had as a Catholic.

My father told us (during our childhood) that if we ever wanted to know anything we should go to the source and to always have the correct tools on hand to do the job right.

When I started hearing and seeing, on television, the upheaval of the Islamic Revolution, in Iran, and the speech of a brave and courageous man they called Ayatullah Khomeini, I became very intense on knowing why it was happening and in knowing who this man was who had been exiled and was making his return to his homeland.

"Our Lord! We have heard the call of one calling (us) to faith, 'Believe ye in the Lord,, and we have believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, blot out from us our iniquities, and take to Thyself our souls in the company of the righteous"[13].

It was something more spectacular than I had ever read about in my high school history books. There was a charge in it that I could not explain, and up until that time, I had never really heard anything about Islam, Prophet Muhammad or Muslims, for that matter.

I bought ***A. Yussuf Ali's English Translation of the Holy Qur'an,*** basing my decision on my father's counsel and I began from page one.

It was talking about the same things I had already learned; Adam and Eve in the Garden, disobeyed God due to the wiles of Satan and then, were expelled to Earth; Moses is given the scripture and leads his people out of Egypt, but they forfeited their covenant for a golden calf; Abraham, Ismail and Issac of the religion true, and there, Mary.

Hail Mary! Chaste, pure, chosen above other women, given glad tidings of a Word from Him; his name will be Christ Jesus, son of Mary, held in honor... [14]

And it went on: Practise charity, take care of the orphans, speak a speech that is just, beware of the deceits of the Unbelievers...I was in awe as I neared the end. No place was any obscenity found –no trace of ugliness which I found in the Bible –nothing but pure scripture; a complete religion, the one and only continuing from the first of Abraham. So, it became crystal clear to me that Islam is the final, refined message from God.

True, just, undeniable, containing what I had always felt and that is this: There is only One God; unique, needing no partner, powerful, and yet merciful and kind. How could God be more than one; Creator of such a vast universe and more?

With this understanding, though, came many tests to my new-found-faith; albeit necessary tests. Did I really believe - did I really submit to His Will - was I really worthy?

I began by only putting on a scarf, covering all of my hair.

"And say to the believing women...that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers..."[15]

Immediately the responses that I encountered proved the rightness of it all. I was chided, spit at, hit and cursed. Well, of course, a great deal of this was due to the propaganda which caused mass hysteria against Iran and not having their facts straight about the religion of Islam, however, it hurt just the same, but I had learned forgiveness and perseverance from my mother.

It was difficult for my family in the beginning; this change I was making, however, we are very close at heart, today, due to my faith and reliance on Allah.

"And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: 'My Lord! Bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.'"[16]

Almost at once the veils over my understanding fell away and I started rejecting a lot of the 'big-business' propaganda that had infiltrated into my life.

"Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error; whosoever rejects Evil and believes in God bath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks..."[17]

The 'Big Sell' eats away at the very fabric of human society to the point that life has only a superficial meaning and high value is put on every inanimate object which man can produce.

"The life of this world is alluring to those who reject faith, and they scoff at those who believe. But the righteous will be above them on the Day of Resurrection; for God bestows His abundance on whom He will "[18].

I had developed an intense desire to go to Iran--the country of martyrs; having an air so thick with emotions, direction and goal, at that time, and having the presence of an undeniable strength caressing it in the hands of an unseen power.

Ten years after I started practicing the tenets of Islam the opportunity presented itself for me to be able to fulfil my desire.

"Not equal are those Believers who sit (at home) and receive no hurt, and those who strive and fight in the cause...God has granted a grade higher to those who strive..."[19]

I wished very much to become involved in some type of work regarding the Holy Qur'an and in due time I was approached to work with a group of people on a commentary of the Holy Qur'an.

"***And for those who fear God, He prepares a way out" "And He provides for him from*** (***sources***) ***he never could imagine...***"[20]

Those of you who know anything about the rigors of editing know that it is very time-consuming and attention to detail is very necessary.

Spending many hours discussing the meaning of a single word, or phrase, can cause the ordinary soul to become frustrated, but that frustration is ultimately quelled when peace and tranquillity cover the heart at the point where there is that final agreement and gives those involved renewed enthusiasm to continue.

Sometimes you will notice more spacing than usual on a line or within the phonetic brackets (/ /), but this is due to the fact that the Zarnegar program is a Farsi program and it took much time trying to place the little phonetic line over, or the little dot under, the correct letter, because English is written from left to right and Farsi is written from right to left, so, I had a bit of anarchy on my hands for a time.

I leave you, now, in the hopes that you, too, will be provoked to question and seek. (Seek and you will find). Looking back, I feel that Allah does consider me worthy.

"God is the protector of those who have faith; from the depths of darkness He will lead them into light"[21].

Wa Salam.

1. 17:9
2. 16:89
3. 6:54
4. Usul al-Kafi, vol 2, p. 599.
5. 85:21, 22
6. 15:9
7. 73:20
8. 56:77, 79
9. 18:65
10. 16:89
11. 20:50
12. 76:30
13. 3:193
14. 3:42-45
15. 24:31
16. 17:24
17. 2:256
18. 2:212
19. 4:95
20. 65:2-3
21. 2:257

Acknowledgment

Tafsir Nemunah is compiled by the great writer and researcher, His Eminence Ayatullah il-Ozma Nasir Makarim Shirazi, and with the cooperation of an estimable group of Muslim scholars, Hujaj-ul-Islam:

1. Hajjatul-Islam Muhammad Rida Ashtiyani
2. Hajjatul-Islam Muhammad Jafar Emami
3. Hajjatul-Islam Abdur-Rassul Hassani
4. Hujjatul-Islam Sayyed Hassan Shujaiee
5. Hujjatul-Islam Mahmud Abdellahi
6. Hujjatul-Islam Muhsen Ghara'ati
7. Hujjatul-Islam Muhammad Muhammadi

By the way, it should be notified that for the translation of this volume, Tafsir Nemunah has been mainly utilized.

* * * *

يَأَيهَا النّاس قَدْ جَاءَكُم بُرْهَنٌ مِّن رّبِّكُمْ وَ أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُوراً مّبِيناً

"O mankind! Verily there has come to you a convincing proof (***the Messenger and the Qur'an***) ***from your Lord: for We have sent unto you a light*** (***that is***) ***manifest."***1

إِنّا نحْنُ نَزّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَ إِنّا لَهُ لحَفِظونَ

"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message and We will assuredly Guard it (***from corruption***)***."***2

وَ مَنْ أَعْرَض عَن ذِكرِى فَإِنّ لَهُ مَعِيشةً ضنكاً وَ نحْشرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَعْمَى

"But whosoever turns away from My Message (***the Qur'an***)***, verily for him is a straitened toilsome life, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgement".***3

وَ نُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَ رَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

"And We send down** (**stage by stage**) **of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy for those who believe … "4

1. 4:174
2. 15:9
3. 20:124
4. 17:82

References

Arabic, Farsi Commentaries

1. ***Tafsir-i-Nemuneh**,* by A Group of Shi'a Scholars with Ayatollah Makarim Shirazi; Dar-ul-Kutub-il-Islamiyyah, Qum, Iran, 1990/1410.

2. ***Majma'-ul-Bayan fi Tafsir-il-Qur'an,*** by Shaykh Abu Ali al-Fadl-ibn-il-Husain-il-Tabarsi, Dar-u-Ihya'-it- Turath-il' Arabi, Beirut, Lebanon, 1960/1380 AH.

3. ***Al-Mizan fi Tafsir-il-Qur'an*** by 'Allamah as-Sayyid Muhammad Husain at- Tabataba'i, al-A'lami lil-Matbu'at, Beirut, Lebanon, 1972/1392 AH.

4. ***Atyab-ul-Bayan fi Tafsir-il-Qur'an*** by Sayyid 'Abdul-Husain Tayyib, Muhammadi Publishing House, Isfahan, Iran, 1962/1382 AH.

5. ***Ad-Durr-ul-Manthur fi-Tafsir-il-Ma'thur*** by Imam 'Abd-ur-Rahman al-Suyuti, Dar-ul-Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon, 1983/1403 AH.

6. ***Al-Tafsir-ul-Kabir*** by Imam Fakh-ir-Razi, Dar-ul-Kutub-il-'islmiyyah, Tehran, 1973/1393.

7. ***Al-Jam'li -Ahkam-il-Qur'an*** (***Tafsir-ul-Qartabi***) by Muhammad-ibn-Ahmad al-Qartabi, Dar-ul-Kutub-il Misriyyah, 1967/1387.

8.***Tafsir-i-Nur-uth-Thaqalayn*** by 'Abd-i-'Ali-ibn Jum'at-ul-'Arusi al-Huweyzi, al-Matba'atul-'ilmiyyah, Qum, Iran, 1963/1383 AH.

9. ***Tafsir-i-Ruh-ul-Janan*** by Jamal-ud-Din Abul-Futuh Razi, Dar-ul-Kutub-il-Islamiyyah, Tehran, 1973/1393 AH.

10. ***Tafsir-i-Ruh-ul-Bayan*** by Isma'il Haqqi al-Burusawi Dar-u-Ihya'-ut- Turath-il-' Arabi, Beirut.

English Translations of Qur'an

1. ***The Holy Qur'an,*** Text, Translation and Commentary by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Publication of the Presidency of Islamic Courts & Affairs, State of Qatar, 1946.

2. ***The Holy Qur'an,*** Arabic Text by a Group of Muslim Brothers, English Translation and footnotes by M. H. Shakir, Tehran, Iran.

3. ***The Glorious Koran****,* Bi-lingual Edition with English Translation by Marmaduke Pickthall, printed in Great Britain by W. & J. MacKay Ltd., Chatham, Kent, London.

4. ***Al-Mizan, An Exegesis of the Qur'an*** by al-Allamah as-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn-at- Tabataba'i, Translated by Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, Vol. 1, Tehran, WOFIS, 1983.

5. ***The Koran translated*** with notes by N. J. Dawood, Penguin Books Ltd, New York, U.S.A, 1978.

6. ***The Koran Interpreted,*** Translated by Arthur J. Arberry, London, Oxford University Press, 1964.

7. ***The Glorious Koran,*** Translated with Commentary of Divine Lights by Ali Muhammad Fazil Chinoy, Printed at the Hyderabad Bulletin Press, Secanderabad-India, 1954.

8. ***Holy Qur'an,*** Shakir, M. H., Ansariyan Publications, Qum, Islamic Republic of Iran, 1993.

9. ***The Holy Qur'an with English Translation of the Arabic Text and Commentary According to the Version of the Holy Ahlul-Bait*** by S. V. Mir Ahmad Ali, published by Tahrike- Tarsile Qur'an, Inc., New York, 1988.

10. ***A Collection of Translation of the Holy Qur'an****,* supplied, corrected and compiled by Al-Balagh Foundation, Tehran, Iran, (unpublished).

Supporting Technical References

1. ***Nahjul -Balagha*** by as -Sayyid ar -Radi Dar -ul -Kitab al -Lubnani, Beirut, Lebanon, 1982.

2. ***Sharh -i -Nahjul -Balagha*** by Ibn-i Abi al-Hadid, Dar -u -Ihya' -il - Kutub -il -' Arabiyyah, Eypt, 1959/1378 AH.

3. ***Nahj-al-Balagha*** *of Amir al-Muminin 'Ali ibn Abi Talib,* selected and compiled by as-Sayyid Abul-Hassan 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ar-Radi al-Musawi, Translated by Sayyid Ali Raza, World Organization For Islamic Services (WOFIS), Tehran, Iran, 1980.

4. ***Nahjul Balagha*** *-Hazrat Ali,* Translated by Sheikh Hassan Saeed, Chehel Sotoon Library &

Theological School, Tehran, Iran, 1977.

5. ***Al-Kafi*** by ash-Shaykh Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ya'qub ibn Ishaq al-Kulayni ar-Razi, Translated and published by WOFIS, Tehran, Iran, 1982.

6. ***Shi'a,*** by Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba-i, translated by Sayyid Hosein Nasr, Qum, Ansariyan Publications, 1981.

7. ***Williams Obstetrics,*** Pritchard, Jack A., 1921; MacDonald, Paul C., 1930, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, U.S.A, 1976.

8. ***The Encyclopedia Americana,*** Americana Corporation, New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., U.S.A, 1962.

9. ***Compton's Encyclopedia and Fact-Index,*** F.E. Compton Company, printed in U.S.A, 1978.

10. ***Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged,*** Second Edition, by Noah Webster, Published by the World Publishing Company, Cleveland and New York, U.S.A, 1953.

Phraseological and Philological Sources

1. ***A Glossary of Islamic Technical Terms Persian-English,*** by M. T. Akbari and others, Edited by B. Khorramshahi, Islamic Research Foundation, Astan, Quds, Razavi, Mashhad, Iran, 1991.

2. ***Al-Mawrid, a Modern Arabic-English Dictionary,*** Third Edition,by Dr. Rohi Baalbaki, Dar el-Ilm Lilmulmalayin, Beirut, Lebanon, 1991.

3. ***Elias' Modern Dictionary, Arabic-English,*** by Elias A. Elias & Ed. E. Elias, Beirut, Lebanon, 1980.

4. ***An Introduction to Arabic Phonetics and the Orthoepy of the Qur'an,*** by Bahman Zandi, Islamic Research Foundation, Astan, Quds, Razavi, Mashhad, Iran, 1992.

5. ***A Concise Dictionary of Religious Terms & Expressions (English-Persian & Persian-English),*** by Hussein Vahid Dastjerdi, Vahid Publications, Tehran, Iran, 1988.

6. ***Arabic-English Lexicon,*** by Edward William Lane, Librarie Du Liban, Beirut, Lebanon, 1980.

7. ***A Dictionary and Glossary,*** by Penrice B.A. Curzon Press Ltd., London, Dublin, Reprinted, 1979.

8. ***Webster's New World Dictionary,*** Third College Edition, by David B. Guralnik, Simon & Schuster, New York, U.S.A, 1984.

9. ***The New Unabridged English-Persian Dictionary,*** by Abbas Aryanpur (Kashani), Amir Kabir

Publication Organization, 1963.

10. ***The Larger Persian English Dictionary,*** by S. Haim, published in Farhang Moaser, Tehran, Iran, 1985.

A Presentation to Muslims

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ أَطِيعُواْ اللّهَ وَأَطِيعُواْ الرَّسُولَ وَأُوْلِي الأَمْرِ مِنكُ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficient, The Merciful

"O ye who believed! Obey Allah, and obey the Apostle, and those charged with authority among you". 1

(***'Those charged with authority'***

are only the twelve sinless Imams (a) and; at the time of occultation, Sources of Imitation, who are learned, pious, and just, should be referred to.)

في إكمال الدين في حديث عن جابر الجعفي عن جابر بن عبد الله الانصاري قال: قلت: يا رسول الله عرفنا الله ورسوله، فمن اولي الامر الذين قرن الله طاعتهم بطاعتك؟ فقال (ص) هم خلفائي يا جابر، وأئمة المسلمين بعدي أولهم علي بن أبي طالب، ثم الحسن والحسين، ثم علي بن الحسين، ثم محمد بن علي المعروف في التوراة بالباقر وستدركه يا جابر فإذا لقيته فاقرأه مني السلام. ثم الصادق جعفر بن محمد، ثم موسى بن جعفر، ثم علي بن موسى، ثم محمد بن علي، ثم علي بن محمد، ثم الحسن بن علي، ثم سميي وكنيي حجة الله في أرضه، وبقيته في عباده ابن الحسن بن علي، ذاك الذي يفتح الله على يديه مشارق الارض ومغاربها

In 'Ikmal-ud-Din' a tradition, through 'Jabir-il-Ju'fi', is narrated from Jabir-ibn- Abdillah thus:

I said:

"O Messenger of Allah, we have known Allah and His Apostle; then who is 'Ulil-Amr', those that Allah has made their obedience the same as your obedience?'

Then, the Prophet (S) said:

'O Jabir! they are, after me, my successors and the Guides of Muslims; the first of them is Ali-ibn-Abi Talib; then (Imam) Hassan, and (Imam) Husain; then Ali-ibn-il-Husain; then Muhammad-ibn-Ali, known in the Torah as Baqir, whom you will see.

O Jabir! When you visit him, give my regards to him. After him, there is Sadiq, -Ja'far-ibn-Muhammad; and after him Musa-ibn-Ja'far; then Ali-ibn-Musa; then Muhammad-ibn-Ali; then Ali-ibn-Muhammad, then Hassan-ibn-Ali; and after him (there comes) Al-Gha'im whose name and sir-name is the same as mine. He is Allah's Authority on the Earth and His Remainder amongst His servants.

He is the son of (Imam) Hassan-ibn-Ali (a.-Askari). This is the very personality by whose hands Allah will open the Easts and Wests of the world.'[2]

قال الله تعالى: "وما ينطق عن الهوى إن هو إلا وحي يوحى"

"Nor does the Apostle speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed".[3]

قال النبي (ص): "إني تارك فيكم الثقلين، كتاب الله حبل ممدود من السماء إلى الأرض وعترتي أهل بيتي، وإن اللطيف الخبير أخبرني أنهما لن يفترقا حتى يردا علي الحوض فانظروا بماذا تخلفوني" وفي حديث آخر: "لن تضلوا ما إن تمسكتم بهما"

The Prophet (S) said:

"I leave behind me two weighty (very worthy and important) things:

The book of Allah (i.e. the Quran), which is a stretched string from the heaven to the earth, and my progeny, my Ahlul-Bait; for verily Allah, The Merciful, The Aware, informed me that never, never, will these Two get separated from each other until they meet me at the Houd of Kauthar (the Pond of Abundance).

Therefore, be careful and contemplate on how you will treat them (after me)"

...and in another tradition it is added:

"Never, never, shall you get astray if you attach yourself to these two".[4]

Abul-Hassan-ir-Rida (a) said:

"May the Mercy of Allah be upon the servant who Keeps alive our commandment".

I asked him (a) how the one could keep your commandment alive.

He (a) said:

"He (can) learn our sciences and teach them to people. In fact if people knew (the merits) and goodnesses of our speech, surely they would follow us." 5

1. 4:59
2. Ikmal-ud-Din, Vol. 1, p. 253; with nearly similar meaning, in Yanabi-ul-Mawaddah, p. 117
3. 53:3,4
4. Ma'uni-ul-Akhbur, p. 90, tradition 2, & Musnad Ahmad-ibn-Hanbal, Vol. 3, p.17, and other books from the Sunnite School and Shi 'ah School mentioned in Ihqaq-ul-Haqq, Vol 9, p. 309 to 375
5. Ma' ani-ul-Akhbar, p. 180 & 'Uyun-i-Akbar-ur-Rida, Vol. 1, p. 207

Surah al-Jathiya, Chapter 45, Verses 1 - 22

(The Kneeling)
Section (juz' 25)
Number of Verses: 37

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The Chapter was revealed in Mecca. The designation of the Chapter is taken from Verse 28 in which the word jathiya denotes kneeling. God Almighty is described as the Omnipotent (al-'Aziz) and the Wise (al-Hakim) in the opening and closing Verses of the Chapter.

The subject matter of the Chapter includes the Greatness of the Qur'an, arguments substantiating Divine Unity, refutation of materialistic views, history of some ancient peoples, warning to the astray, encouragement to forgiveness, and allusions to the depictions of resurrection.

The Merit of Reciting the Chapter

According to a Prophetic tradition,

*"God Almighty will conceal the defects of whoever recites Surah al-Jathiya and will turn his fear into serenity*1.*"*

Surah al-Jathiya - Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

حم

تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ

إِنَّ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

1. Ha Mim.
2. The revelation of the Book is from Allah, the Omnipotent, the All-Wise.
3. Verily, there are signs for the believers in the heavens and the earth.

Allah is All-Wise.

His Book is full of Wisdom[2].

His Messenger is the instructor of Wisdom[3].

His Book and Creation are manifest, though the God fearing solely benefit from His Book.

"It is Guidance for the God fearing"[4].

The creation may merely remind believers of their God.

The Holy Qur'an constitutes the commonly used letters of alphabet and it was revealed in time.

Revelation of the Book and the Law are among the greatest Divine Bounties. As a consequence, it precedes the creation of the heavens and the earth (tanzil al-kitab

"Revelation of the Book").

In the first place, specification of the position of the Holy Qur'an should precede Its Instructions in the manner of promulgation.

The textual content of the Qur'an is impervious to alterations, since it is revealed by God.

Ha Mim is the Name of the Chapter. It is narrated from Ibn 'Abbas that Ha Mim is the greatest of Divine Names. The Name alludes to the Divine Names beginning with Ha or Mim, e.g. the Praiseworthy (Hamid), the Clement (Halim), the Living (Hayy), the Truth (Haqq), the Wise (Hakim), the Arbitrator (Hakim), the Protector (Hafid), the Guardian (Hafid), the Ruler (Malik), the Glorious (Majid), the Honorable (Majid), the Beginner (Mubdi'), the Returner (Mu'id), the Exalted (Mu'izz), the Vigilant (Muhaymin).

It is also said that Ha Mim is an oath by Divine Clemency and Sovereignty, viz. I swear by My Clemency and Sovereignty that I shall not chastise those sincerely uttering 'There is no god save Allah.'

Some say that Ha and Mim are the two middle letters al-Rahman ("the Merciful") and the name of Muhammad (S) alluding to the secret known by God Almighty and his Friend, Muhammad.

There are other justifications for these two letters; however, since the letters of alphabet in the openings of a number of Qur'anic Chapters are, as it is well known in Islamic sources, among ambiguous Verses (mutashabihat) whose knowledge is with God Almighty and

"those firmly rooted in knowledge" (rasikhun fi al-'ilm).

The word tanzil is an infinitive used ad hoc as a past participle denoting an oath regarding the revelation of the Qur'an by God, the Omnipotent, the Dominant, the Wise, and the Beneficent through Whose Everlasting Will has established everything in order out of Wisdom such that the system of creation is flawless.

According to exegets, the following Verse is substantiated by the fact that when theoretical sciences may not be proved through the five senses, i.e., any matter beyond the domain of the senses should be proven through either apriori demonstration, viz. from cause to effect, or aposteriori demonstration, viz. from effect to cause.

Since Divine Existence is Supernatural, i.e., beyond perception, unintelligible, and without cause, it is the cause of causes not necessitating apriori demonstration. As a consequence, His Existence maybe proved merely through aposteriori demonstration, viz. the perceiver should become aware of and attain certitude from effect to cause and believe in His Attributes of Glory and Beauty.

Therefore, many a Qur'anic Verse prove the Existence of the Creator and attainment of certitude through the existence of the heavens and the earth.

The blessed Verse denotes that whoever, if not a materialist, has a holistic view of this vast world and the system of cosmos like the levels of heavens and the earth and the revolving confirms the truth of the former view and believes in the Omniscient and Omnipotent God, the Creator, the fountainhead of creation and the Governor and Instructor of the world.

The existence of the world serves as the indubitable argument for the Existence and the Attributes of

God Almighty. It is common sense to know that any building requires a builder, any created entity requires a creator, any moved entity requires a mover, and any composite entity requires a composer. All superior and inferior creatures serve as signs for believers.

Therefore, it is sufficient for the attainment of faith and belief in the Existence of the One God to have an open and enlightened mind and know His Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Wisdom through meditation on the heavens and the earth. There would be no need for philosophical arguments, even if we happen to be unaware of the manner of composition, the chain of causality, and the perfect harmony among heavenly bodies and other creatures.

"Signs for believers"

particularly denotes believers since the eyes of their hearts are open, but concupiscence has blinded those of non-believers, depriving them of perceiving the rays of light emanating from Divine Existence illuminating the worlds and rendering their eyes of the heart incapable of perceiving such light.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 4

وَفِي خَلْقِكُمْ وَمَا يَبُثُّ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ آيَاتٌ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ

4. And in your creation, and what He scattered [***in the world of existence***] ***of moving*** [***living***] ***creatures are signs*** [***of Divine Omnipotence***] ***for people who have faith with certainty.***

All existence is the book of knowing God. In this vein, the heaven, mankind, and the animal world may render us assistance towards achieving one single goal. The creation of heavens, the earth, and living creatures lies on one scale and that of man on the other. Making mention of man independently and prior to other living creatures is worthy of note.

The existence of heavens and the earth are referred to in the preceding Verse, but the Verse in question regards the creation of mankind and all living creatures of the world as signs for believers who have attained to certitude, since the level of the latter stands above that of faith; knowledge of certitude ('ilm al-yaqin) is inferior to essence of certitude ('ayn al-yaqin) and the latter is in turn inferior to realization of certitude (haqq al-yaqin).

Besides signs upon the horizons, the Verse in question treats of signs upon the soul saying:

"And in your creation and what He scattered [***in the world of existence***] ***of moving*** [***living***] ***creatures are signs*** [***of Divine Omnipotence***] ***for people who have faith with certainty."***

According to a well known narration attributed to the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali (as), man is the microcosm embracing the macrocosm. His qualities constitute an admixture of the qualities shared by all

living creatures and the diversity of his creation is an extract of all the accidents of the world.

The structure of a human cell is as enigmatic as that of an industrial metropolitan city and the creation of one single hair whose various characteristics have been discovered by science may serve as a great Divine Sign.

Thousands of kilometers of veins and vessels some of which are extraordinarily delicate and thousands of kilometers of commissural fibers of the nervous system and the manner of their interrelation with the highly complicated, enigmatic, and powerful brain system and the functions of each and every internal bodily organ and their strange harmony at the time of emergencies and the strong immune system against external bodies demonstrate the greatness of Divine Signs.

Besides mankind, hundreds of thousands of living creatures from microscopic living beings to huge animals with totally diverse characteristics and structures, one of which may be the subject of lifelong research for many a scientist, bear testimony to Divine Signs.

In spite of the fact that thousands of books have been authored on the mysteries surrounding their creation, human knowledge is still quite limited. Each of these creatures serves as a sign of the Creator's Infinite Knowledge, Wisdom, and Omnipotence.

What is the reason lying behind the fact that many individuals witness such signs for decades but they are totally unaware of them? The Holy Qur'an provides an answer to the question: these signs are for seekers of faith and certitude and those who think.

They are for those who have opened their hearts and are thirsty for certitude and knowledge. Such people do not fail to notice the slightest movement and the tiniest being, rather ponder about them for long hours, thus transcend towards God and the Book of knowing the Creator, spending their time in devotions and supplication, brimming the goblets of their hearts with the wine of love for God.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 5

وَاخْتِلافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ رِزْقٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَاحِ آيَاتٌ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

5. And in the alternation of night and day and the provision** [viz. rain] **that Allah sends down from the sky and revives therewith the earth after its death and in the turning about of the winds are signs for a people who understand.

The book of existence abounds in diverse signs the understanding of which requires intellection. Following an enumeration of three Bounties, viz. light, water, and air, each of which play a significant role in the life of mankind and other living beings and serve as a Divine Sign, the Verse goes on to say

that

"in the alternation of night and day and the provision** [viz. rain] **that Allah sends down from the sky and revives therewith the earth after its death and in the turning about of the winds are signs for a people who understand."

The question of the order of 'light and darkness' and the alternation of night and day each of which substitutes the other with a precise pattern are well calculated and astonishing. If day time were permanent or too long, the temperature would increase to the extent that all living beings would burn. If the night were everlasting or too long, all living beings would freeze to death!

The word ikhtilaf may not denote alternation but the same difference in the length of nights and days in different seasons of the year through which man may benefit from the produce, rain, snow, and other bounties.

Interestingly scientists say that despite the differences in the length of night and day in different altitudes and longitudes, a calculation of the days of the year demonstrates that the sun shines equally on each and every point![5]

Secondly, mention is made of rain, the heavenly life bestowing element regarding the delicacy of its nature and its reviving force is indubitable. It is a sign of life, freshness, and beauty. The fact is that water constitutes the main constituent element of man, many animals, and plants.

Thirdly, mention is made of winds turning around and moving the air which is full of oxygen, making it available to living beings. Winds move the dioxide polluted air to be purified on plains, forests, and deserts. After being purified, the wind moves the fresh air to cities and habitats.

It is a source of wonder that animals and plants precisely function in opposition to each other, i.e., the former takes oxygen and emits carbon dioxide and the latter functions vice versa so that equilibrium may be maintained in vital system and the air supply of the earth may not come to an end through the passage of time.

Furthermore, winds pollinate plants and scatter seeds in different lands, help pastures and forests grow, make waves in oceans, waves that invigorate the seas and purify water from putrefaction and decay, and make ships sail in oceans.[6]

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 6

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ

5. These are the Ayat** (‘Verses; signs; proofs, evidence’) **of Allah which We recite to you with

truth. Then in which speech after Allah and His Ayat will they believe?

Those listening to Divine Ayat but do not heed Guidance, suffer from complications, but Divine Ayat are true and evident.

In this Verse, God Almighty addresses His Messenger, Muhammad (S), saying that when disbelievers do not believe in these evident Ayat revealed to you in truth from the springhead of Divine Glory in conformity with logical principles, common sense, and human nature, they will not believe in the words of prophets and their scriptures nor in the sayings of ancient sages.

It demonstrates that the Qur'anic Verses are so unchangeable and consistent with pure nature; they have made evident the path of guidance for people that there is no room for denial or objection for anyone. One unaffected by such evident proofs may not be influenced by any true word; rather such an individual has lost his pure human nature.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verses 7-8

وَيْلٌ لِكُلِّ أفَّاكٍ أثِيمٍ

يَسْمَعُ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ يُصِرُّ مُسْتَكْبِراً كَأَنْ لَمْ يَسْمَعْهَا فَبَشِّرْهُ بِعَذَابٍ أليمٍ

7. Woe to every sinful liar.
8. Who hears the Verses of Allah being recited to him, yet persists arrogantly as if he heard them not. So announce to him a painful torment!

The present participle ***affak*** derived from ifk denotes "one who tells many lies." ***Athim*** derived from ithm signifies "one who is very sinful."

Wayla, recurring in the Qur'an 27 times is used in the sense of "woe to," this word too refers to intellectual traitors who author false claims and attribute them to God;

(***"Then woe to those who write the Book with their own hands and then say, 'This is from Allah,'"***)[7].

It also denotes those who do wrong in their business transactions, like

"Those who give less in measure and weight"[8].

The word Wayla refers to ideological deviants, such as disbelievers[9] and polytheists[10] and also to slanderers and backbiters[11].

Divine Chastisement is consistent with the offenses committed. One who hears the words of the Prophet (S) but ignores them and as such offends him will be chastised by a severe torment and that of one who slanders others mockingly will be punished by a humiliating torment.

According to some exegetes wayla used in the sense of 'woe' connotes warning to very sinful liars. Some have also said that it is the name of a well in the lowest level of the hell and the dwelling place of disbelievers and the damned in the sight of Allah.

It is also said that the antecedent of the pronoun of yasma'u "hears" is Nadhr ibn Harith;

"Who hears the Verses of Allah recited to him, yet persists with arrogance as if he heard them not. So announce to him a painful torment!"[12]

Whoever might be the antecedent of the pronoun, the Verse refers to anyone ignoring the Qur'anic Verses as Divine Revelation for whom severe punishment is in store.

It is worthy of note that the word bishara is used in the sense of good tiding; however, it had hoc signifies Divine Retribution that is in store for disbelievers, as if the good tiding for contesters is the warning of torment.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 9

وَإِذَا عَلِمَ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا شَيْئاً اتَّخَذَهَا هُزُواً أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ

9. And when he learns something of Our Verses, he makes them a jest. For such there will be a humiliating torment.

Since humiliation lies in offense, the mockers' chastisement is a humiliating torment. The blessed verse makes mention of another blameworthy quality of the arrogant and begrudging disbelievers. They not only ignore Divine Verses but also react against them through slander and mockery. A humiliating torment is in store for such people.

As mentioned above, chastisement should be consistent with the wrong deed. Humiliation is the recompense for humiliation. Disbelievers such as Abu Jahl and Nadhr ibn Harith upon hearing Qur'anic Verses, not only ignored them but also engaged in mockery and slander and attributed untrue qualities which were worthy of themselves to the Prophet (S); hence the severe and humiliating torment in store for them.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 10

مِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَلا يُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ مَا كَسَبُوا شَيْئاً وَلا مَا اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

10. Before them there is Hell. And that which they have earned will be of no profit to them, nor [***will be of any profit to them***] ***those whom they have taken as protectors***) ***besides Allah. And theirs will be a severe torment.***

Mundane property will be of no avail on the Last Day. It is merely attending to Hellfire that may serve as the best means of abstaining from arrogance and persistence in committing sins.

This blessed Verse explicates

"humiliating torment"

('adhabun muhin) as

"Before them there is Hell."

The phrase ***Min wara'ihim jahanamu*** literally means "there is Hell behind them," though the hell is before them and it is in store for them. It may connote that they turn to mundane affairs ignoring Divine Retribution. According to a common expression, man ignores certain things.

The Holy Qur'an says:

"They love the transient life and disregard the severe Doomsday."

The Verse further says that if they suppose that their abundant wealth, idols, and false deities may solve their problems, they are in sheer err since:

"whatever they gain nor protectors from whom they sought succor may never rescue them from Divine Retribution"

and as there is no way out, they will have to taste Divine Wrath

"and there is a severe torment in store for them."

They paid no heed to Divine Verses and Signs and God increased their torment. They were arrogant and Divine Retribution fell into their share. The torment is quite severe, everlasting, and humiliating and deeply affects the sinful. Undoubtedly, committing mortal sins before God will lead to severe Divine Retribution.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 11

هَذَا هُدى وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِنْ رِجْزٍ أَلِيمٌ

11. This [***Qur'an***] ***is guidance and those who disbelieve in the Ayat*** (***signs, proofs, Verses***) ***of their Lord, for them there is a painful and awe inspiring torment.***

The word rijz denotes anxiety and may connote rijs ("filth"). The Verse may connote that disbelievers are being chastised by polluted and disgusting material.

The demonstrative pronoun hadha

(***"this"***)

refers to the Quranic Verses revealed to the Prophet (S) for the guidance of mankind. Those who were not guided by the Qur'an, but persisted in their disbelief and underrated the Divinely Revealed Verses for their guidance and attainment of felicity shall taste torment and chastisement.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 12

اللَّهُ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْبَحْرَ لِتَجْرِيَ الْفُلْكُ فِيهِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

12. It is Allah Who has subjected to you the sea, that ships may sail through it by His Command, and that you may seek of His Bounty, and that you may be thankful.

Divine Acts are Purposeful, Wise, and Fruitful for mankind. The seas and other natural phenomena are under Divine Sway.

Even though

"By His Command"

is Divine Bounty and Mercy, but man has to make attempts to attain to them;

(***"that you make seek of His Bounty"***).

Divine Essence reminds man with Its Infinite Grace to behold! Know thy God, and know that your Lord is He Who has subjected to you boundless seas abounding in waves such that by Divine Command ships may easily sail in them and thus benefit from Divine Bounty and Mercy. He is also reminded that he may express his gratitude if he remember Divine Bounties.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 13

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً مِنْهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

13. And He has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth. It is all a favor and kindness from Him. Indeed there are signs in it for a people who think deeply.

All creation is available for man's use and the harmony of the constituents of existence solely indicates Divine Oneness. The Blessed Verse in question reminds mankind that whatever exists in the seas, heavens, earth, and heavenly bodies have been subjected to them for their creation, sustenance, and welfare. Each and every element of this organic whole has its own specific function.

Upon perceiving the great and remarkable system of the world, the wise study the system and immediately submit to Divine Will and accept that the immense wheels of creation are incessantly revolving, the sun and the moon shine, the stars ascend and descend in their specific manner, the earth, resembling a cradle, gently rocks, constituent elements despite inconsistency and contrariness stay in harmony for a specific span of time specified in the system of creation subject to Divine Command regarding genesis and function to sustain human life.

The wise do not regard such enormous creation to no avail, but maintain that it leads to a great purpose and benefit. Upon scrutiny it seems that its greatest benefit is the enigmatic creation of mankind who becomes existent ex nihilo, becomes perfect from imperfection, prepares himself for everlasting life.

To demonstrate man's superiority over all creatures, it would suffice to know that all archangels were commanded to prostrate before him and many an angel were subjected to manage the affairs of man such that he may avail himself of them.

"Cloud and wind, moon and sun move in the sky

That thou mayest gain bread, and not eat it unconcerned.

For thee all are revolving and obedient.

It is against the requirements of justice if though obeyest not."

As mentioned above, man's perfection and dignity depend on his intellection and knowledge.

According to a Prophetic tradition,

"one hour spent on thinking is better than sixty years of devotions."

As per another tradition,

"one hour spent on thinking is better than one year of devotions."[13]

It is evident that the difference between the traditions concerning thinking lies in the types and hierarchies of thinking, i.e., the thought concerning devotions is meritorious and praiseworthy in its own right, but it may not be compared with that regarding Divine Attributes and Acts. The latter is superior to the former. True submission to Divine Will depends on the accurate understanding the subject of worship.

As a consequence, the dependent clause li-ya'budun attested in 51:56:

(***"And I created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me*** [***alone***]***"***)

is interpreted by scholars as li-ya'rifun denoting "getting to know."

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 14

قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَغْفِرُوا لِلَّذِينَ لا يَرْجُونَ أَيَّامَ اللَّهِ لِيَجْزِيَ قَوْماً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

14. [***O Prophet***] ***say to the believers to forgive those*** [***i.e., leave them to God***] ***who hope not for the Days of Allah*** [***viz. the Last Day***]***, that He may recompense people, according to what they have earned.***

The Noble Prophet (S) is Divinely appointed to enlighten the believers as to their manner of conduct toward disbelievers. Undoubtedly, faith requires forgiving and magnanimity. Consequently, one ethical Command is provided in the blessed Verse in question concerning their encounter with disbelievers so that the foregoing logical discussions be perfected by this ethical Command.

Addressing the Prophet (S), God Almighty says:

"Say unto the believers to forgive those who hope not for the Days of Allah"

rather than be strict with them. Owing to their distance from the fundamentals of faith and religious ethical principles, they may suffer from undesirable and inhumane conducts and attitudes; however, you are supposed to treat them magnanimously and generously lest they may wax their animosity and further distance from Truth.

Such magnanimity and generosity will improve their conduct and may also make them embrace the pure faith.

Such instructions are recurrently attested in the Holy Qur'an, e.g.

"So turn away from them and say peace! But they will come to know"[14].

Basically, strictness and persistence in retaliation are of no avail in dealing with the ignorant, but showing indifference and magnanimity may serve as a means of awakening and guidance. It is to be noted that it is not a general rule, since in a number of cases there remains no other alternative save retaliation and punishment.

Another point is that all days are days of Allah; nonetheless, Days of Allah are applied to specific days as the designation indicates their significance. The expression is attested twice in the Holy Qur'an, once in the Verse in question and another instance is to be found with a broader application in Chapter 14[15].

The Days of Allah have been interpreted as different days within the body of Islamic traditions. For instance, according to 'Ali ibn Ibrahim's , the Days of Allah are enumerated as the Day of Mahdi's (as) Rise, the day of death, and the Day of Resurrection.

According to another Prophetic tradition:

"The Days of Allah are the days of His Bounties and those of His Trials by afflictions."[16]

This expression indicates the significance of the Last Day, the day of Divine Manifest Rule over anyone and anything, and the day of total administration of justice.

To prevent these individuals from misusing such magnanimity and forgiving, the Verse ends in

"that He may recompense people, according to what they have earned."

Some exegets have regarded the clause as a warning against disbelievers and sinners; nonetheless, some have considered it as a good tiding for believers because of their forgiveness and magnanimity. The clause may equally indicate good tidings for the latter and warning for the former.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 15

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحاً فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ثُمَّ إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ

15. Whosoever does a good deed, it is for himself, and whosoever does evil, it is against [himself]. Then you will be made to return to your Lord.

Divine Retribution and Reward is just and according to man's good and evil deeds.

The blessed Verse says:

"Whoever does a good deed, he will gain the benefits thereof and whoever commits evil acts, he will reap the evil consequences thereof."

The same expression is recurrently attested in the Qur'an with different wordings as a reply to those who

inquire what gain or loss may be made by God owing to their obedience or rebellion and is the reason behind insistence on obedience to or rebellion against Him.

These Verses express that the rewards and the evil consequences will fall into their share. It is you who tread the path of perfection through your good deeds and soar toward God and it is again you who fall into depravity, Divine Wrath, deprivation from His Mercy, and ending up with everlasting damnation out of your sins and evil deeds.

All Divinely appointed obligations, prophetic missions, and the revelation of Books are for the same purpose.

The Qur'an says:

"And whoever gives thanks, he gives thanks for [***the good of***] ***himself. And whoever is unthankful, then indeed, Allah is Self-Sufficient and Praiseworthy"***17.

It also says:

"So whosoever accepts the guidance, it is only for himself and whosoever goes astray, he goes astray merely for his loss"18.

In another instance, the Holy Qur'an says:

"And he who purifies himself, then he purifies solely for his own benefit. And to Allah is the Return [***of all***]***"***19.

Such expressions indicate that the call of the 'callers to Allah' is a great service in all its dimensions rendered to the mankind rather than a one rendered to Allah, the Self-Sufficient or to His Messengers whose Reward will be bestowed to them by Him. Attending to this fact may significantly lead to proceeding toward obedience to God and abstaining from sins.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 16

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

16. And verily We gave the Children of Israel the Scripture, and the understanding of the scripture and its laws, and the Prophethood, and provided them with pleasant [***provisions***]***, and preferred them above the people of the time.***

The Children of Israel failed to benefit from the Divine Favors mentioned in the Verse in question; as a result of their disobedience and wrong doing, their exalted station turned into humility and damnation. This blessed Verse enumerates certain Divine Bounties some of which were bestowed on the Children

of Israel and the offspring of Jacob (Ya'qub).

Firstly, the Torah, embracing theoretical and practical wisdom, was sent down for them.

Secondly, prophets like David (Da'ud), Solomon (Sulayman), Moses (Musa), and Jesus ('Ïsa) were appointed from amongst them. It is reported that one thousand prophets were appointed for their guidance between Moses and Jesus.

Thirdly, they were provided with pleasant provisions like manna and salwa. Fourthly, they were granted superiority and privileges above all peoples of the time and such superiority and privileges are among the best Bounties bestowed on them.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 17

وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ بَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ فَمَا اخْتَلَفُوا إِلاّ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْياً بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ

17. And We gave them clear proofs in matters [***of religion***]***. And they differed not until after the knowledge came to them,*** [***and the difference was***] ***through envy among themselves. Indeed, your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they used to differ.***

God Almighty has given an ultimatum to people to the effect that the worst disbelief is to differ in matters of Truth. Even though God granted them superiority over enemies, instead of being thankful, they differed. The blessed Verse says that from among the privileges bestowed upon the Children of Israel by God Almighty was that He made the affairs of this world and the world to come manifest to them.

We bestowed them the knowledge to be aware of the proper management of this worldly and otherworldly affairs. Some exegets have said that by evident proofs, certain indications in the Torah as to the Prophet of Islam are being meant.

However, despite enjoying many a Bounty, they advertently disobeyed the injunctions of the Torah and knowingly ignored the tidings of the Divine Appointment of the Noble Prophet (S). God will indubitably judge between you and them as well as the objections raised by them.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 18

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَى شَرِيعَةٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لا يَعْلَمُونَ

18. Then We have put you on a way of Commandment. So follow you that and follow not the desires of the ignorant.

God specifies the path of piety and whoever is responsible for guiding the people is supposed to be fully aware of the path. The Noble Prophet (S) was fully aware of the path. The word shari'a is applied to a waterway leading to a river, but in common usage it denotes the path of the prophets. Addressing his Prophet (S) in this blessed Verse, God Almighty says that He has placed him, rather than others, on the Divine Path.

Therefore, he is asked to turn away from the desires of the ignorant. The word amr may ad hoc be employed in the sense of Divine world rather than the world of creation and nature, meaning that your path is from the Divine world descended onto this world of nature.

All the prophets' Divine Laws and Scriptures are descended from the supernatural world and they all embrace Divine Proofs, Wisdom, Teachings, and Laws; however, they differ largely in certain respects, one difference being the circumstances of the time. It is evident that the ancients did not differ much with animals; as a consequence of which the Commandments and Paths suited their understanding.

It may for be owing to this point that a number of prophets were superior to other prophets in rank. God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an[20] that the prophets at any time were superior to others.

Since there are solely five Arch-prophets and the book of prophethood has been sealed by the Prophet of the Islamic faith (S) as the last one, it becomes evident that whatever attains to its final purpose comes to its end.

Therefore, owing to the highest station of the Prophet (S) and his sublime perfectness, and as a consequence of the perfectness and unchangeability of Divine Commands, the Divine Law suits any period of time.

Consequently, the Verse in question reminds us that the Prophet's (S) Divine Law is mentioned following that of prophet Moses (as) and Allah addresses Prophet Muhammad reminding him that your revealed religion is from the Divine World and above any other religion and the Prophet (S) is supposed to follow the same religion and ignore the desires of the ignorant, since he is vested with revealed truths, traditions, and religion so firm in basis that it will remain to the Last Day.

The Islamic faith is such that had Moses and Jesus (as) been Prophet Muhammad's (S) contemporaries, they would have obeyed the same Divine Law.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 19

إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يُغْنُوا عَنْكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئاً وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ

19. They shall never defend you against God and verily the wrong doers are helpers of one another but Allah is the protector of the pious.

Piety leads to the attainment of Divine Protection and Succor. One of characteristics of the pious is their turning away from the passions of people.

"And Allah is the protector of the pious."

The pious abstain from wrong doing and being subject to it. Since disbelievers, irrespective of polytheists and Jews, as mentioned in the Qur'anic Verses, out of their evil intentions, left no stone unturned to make the Prophet of the Islamic faith to follow their distorted religion, the Verse in question as well as other Verses emphatically warn the Prophet (S) against following them.

Such Verses inform the Prophet that they are unable to make the Prophet needless of God Almighty. They also indicate that wrong doers, viz. the disbelievers, help one another, but God is the Friend of the pious.

The Verse refers to the fact that the disbelievers' friendship with one another is of no avail. They may neither stop the occurrence of disasters and afflictions in this world nor may they save their friends from torment in the Last Day. However, as God is the Friend of the pious and He is Omnipotent, He protects and helps His friends at all times.

"Verily the pious are in place of security"[21].

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 20

هَذَا بَصَائِرُ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدىً وَرَحْمَةٌ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ

20. This [***Qur'an***] ***is a clear insight and evidence for mankind and guidance and mercy for people who have faith with certainty.***

Piety is supposed to serve as the basis of insight. Qur'an is the basis of insight in all intellectual, ethical, political, social, economic, and family domains. The demonstrative pronoun hadha apparently refers to the Qur'an and enumerates three Qur'anic merits in the blessed Verse in question.

Firstly, the Holy Qur'an is vision. In the same manner as the eye of the head makes seeing objects and colors possible, the Holy Qur'an is the eye of the heart through which knowledge finds its way to the heart.

One who ponders a while on Qur'anic Verses, the light meant by the Infallible Imam (as):

(*"Knowledge is the light shed by Allah on the heart of whoever He wills from among His servants"*)

illuminates his heart and shows him the path of deliverance from the shadows of ignorance to the light of knowledge and wisdom. Secondly, the Qur'an is Guidance toward the path of felicity and the Guide to

the path of deliverance.

It is by following the Qur'anic teachings that one may leave the way of err and tread on the straight path. Thirdly, the Holy Qur'an is Divine Mercy bestowed on the faithful through following Its Injunctions and Instructions Divine Mercy, Forgiveness, and Bounty will be granted to them. Such merits and virtues belong to those who act upon Qur'anic Verses through certainty and meditation.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 21

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ نَجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَوَاءً مَحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ

21. Do those who commit evil deeds think that We shall hold them equal with those who believe and do righteous good deeds and their life and death shall be equal? How incorrect is the judgment that they make.

The verbal noun ijtirah deriving from the root j-r-h denotes any harm afflicted on the body. Since committing sins hurts the sinner's soul, the verbal form ijtarahu "they harm" is used in this Verse.

It is worthy of note that a comparison between a believer and a disbeliever indicates that the former finds peace of mind by remembering God, is satisfied with whatever God has given to him, is hopeful about future, his path is illuminated, and regards death as migrating to a more spacious dwelling, whereas the latter always circumambulates false deities and illegitimate authorities, entangled with the vain desires of his or others, regards the future to be dark, and considers death as perdition.

Therefore, the Qur'an makes use of comparison and contrast for further illumination so that people with different backgrounds be able to understand the point in question. Thus it is inquired in this Verse regarding the disbelievers thinking that those who have committed sins and opposed the believers who have found guidance and insight through the Qur'an, are worthy of being granted Divine Mercy, and have done good deeds are equal.

It is never like that. How would it be possible to pass such inaccurate judgment? The believers' and disbelievers' life and death are not equal.

Believers have grasped:

"the most trustworthy handhold that will never break"[22],

i.e., through grasping the firmest and unbreakable handhold, believers in their mundane life rely on Divine Mercy and seeking succor from Him and their hearts are illuminated by the light of knowledge. They know that they are always protected by Him and thanks to their hope in Divine Grace they are

happy at all times irrespective of being healthy or sick, poor or rich, and experiencing ups and downs.

They are always patient, satisfied, and submitted to the Divine Will, since they know that everything happens by Divine Will and whatever happens to them is in accordance with Divine Omniscience and Wisdom and the believers' and disbelievers' deaths are not on an equal basis.

After death, the latter descend to the lowest level of nature befitting their mundane life, as God Almighty says in the Qur'an[23] that upon their demise, angels beat them on their faces and their backs and harshly make their souls leave their bodies. Au contraire, upon their demise, believers ascend from the vicissitudes of the mundane world and enter the Divine world as per their way of life in this world.

The angels of mercy bear them the good tidings of transporting them to Paradise and the Abode of Dignity:

(*"an exact recompense* [*according to their deeds*]*"*)[24].

Divine Reward and Retribution are consistent with man's acts. One whose heart is illumined by Divine Light is not on a par with one whose heart is tarnished by the shadows of disbelief.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 22

وَخَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَلِتُجْزَى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لا يُظْلَمُونَ

22. And Allah has created the heavens and the earth with truth, in order that each person may be recompensed what he has earned and they will not be wronged.

The Verse in question substantiates the preceding one. The preceding Verse reads that the sinful think that we regard them on a par with believers. It is wishful thinking. Do they not know that the heavens and the earth are created with truth and in a true system, the good and the evil are not on an equal basis. Creation in truth requires justice in retribution.

According to the blessed Verse, God created the heavens and the earth with truth in order to make manifest his Omnipotence and purposelessness is far from the sacred threshold of the Creator of the world.

The prepositions li- in li-tujza and bi- in bi-ma kasabat indicate that the final purpose of the creation of the heavens and the earth is the existence of man so that he may tread the path of improvement and attain to perfection and on the Last Day that is the destination of his becoming perfect may encounter the recompense of his acts, as it is mentioned in Verse 13 of this Chapter;

"And He has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth,"

so that they may meet the needs of man's life and pave his way toward perfection.

"And they will not be wronged"

refers to the fact that the All-Merciful God who has subjected such great creation and this innovative system of the world for the sake of man will not be wronged, but he will be rewarded for his good deeds and chastised for his evil ones.

1. Majma' al-Bayan [Exegesis], the opening of Chapter 45
2. 36:1-2
3. 2:129
4. 2:2
5. The Holy Qur'an, 2:164; 3:190; 10:6; 28:71.
6. For details regarding the effects of wind and rain, see the Qur'an 30:46-50.
7. 2:79
8. 83:1
9. 14:2
10. 41:6
11. 104:1
12. 45:8
13. al-Mizan, vol. 4, p. 95; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 68, p. 326.
14. 43:89
15. Abraham, Ibrahim
16. Nur al-Thiqalayn [Exegesis], vol. 2, p. 526
17. 31:12
18. 39:41
19. 35:18
20. 2:254
21. 44:51
22. 2:256
23. 8:52
24. 78:26

Surah al-Jathiya, Verses 23 - 37

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 23

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَى سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَى بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

23. Have you seen him who takes his own vain desires as his god? And Allah knowing [him as

such] ***left him astray and sealed his hearing and his heart and put a cover on his sight. Who then will guide him after Allah? Will you not then remember?***

When one follows his vain desires and regards his concupiscence as object of worship, they will turn into a cover covering his vision, hearing, and heart. As a consequence, the Words of Truth may not affect him. In this way, he is not worthy of being guided and thereby he is led astray.

God has made available to man the means of deliverance from error, but when he does wrong to himself and follows the path of error, he will be deprived of Divine Guidance. It is not Divine Will to lead him astray, but his deprivation from Guidance is mere error. It is for the same reason that the Verse closes with the question;

"Will you not then remember?"

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 24

وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلاّ حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلاّ الدَّهْرُ وَمَا لَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلاّ يَظُنُّونَ

24. And they say: "There is nothing but our life of this world, we die and we live [*viz. a group departs and another group enters*] ***nothing destroys us except Nature and Time." And they have no knowledge of it: they are only wishful thinkers.***

The word dahr denotes the passage of time. Materialists maintain that the passage of life time leads to human perdition.[1] Following vain desires blinds the eye of the heart such that he denies resurrection and regards life restricted to transience.

According to this blessed Verse, those who take their vain desires as their deities and obey Satan and concupiscence and thereby weaken their intellect think that life is restricted to this mundane and transient life and deny the life in the world to come, saying that life is nothing save this mundane life in which we see the light and then we die and nothing may destroy man except the passage of time.

Their words are not substantiated by knowledge since they have lost their innate sound nature owing to following their vain desires. They regard Divine Omnipotence as limited and falsely conjecture that the world is limited to this mundane world.

By saying:

"And nothing destroys us except Time"

disbelievers mean the passage of time.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 25

وَإِذَا تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ مَا كَانَ حُجَّتَهُمْ إِلاَّ أَنْ قَالُوا ائْتُوا بِآبَائِنَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

25. And when Our Clear Verses** [**concerning Resurrection**] **are recited to them, their argument is no other than that they say: "Bring back our** [**deceased**] **fathers, if you are truthful."

Qur'anic Verses are clear and enlightening. Instead of thinking about Divine Ayat ("Verses, signs, evidence") disbelievers ask for reviving their ancestors.

"And when"

(wa idh) refers to the preceding Verse concerning the disbelievers' false claims that when the Verses concerning proving Resurrection are recited to them, they fail to provide an acceptable reply saying if the prophets were truthful in proving Resurrection, bring our fathers back to life so that they inform us of the other world and if they accepted your words, we would accept them to be true.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 26

قُلِ اللَّهُ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يَجْمَعُكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لاَ رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ

26. Say: 'Allah gives you life, then causes you to die, then He will assemble you on the Day of Resurrection about which there is no doubt.

The system of creation follows an order dominating the world of existence through the Will of the Wise God denying which stems from ignorance. The evidence of Divine Omnipotence, Wisdom, and Justice is so clear that there leaves no room for any doubt regarding Resurrection.

In the blessed Verse in question God Almighty says:

"O Muhammad, say unto these disbelievers denying Resurrection that God makes you see the light out of human seed and will cause you to die after the completion of this mundane life. Then, He will assemble you on the Day of Resurrection and there is no room for entertaining doubts regarding being assembled on the Last Day; though the majority of people do not know."

The Verse refers to the fact that if they knew, they would recognize the order, harmony, and purpose of their own creation and would be capable of perceiving the qualities of their life and death.

In this case, they could be certain that there is a significant purpose behind man's life and death – this worldly death is a preamble to everlasting life, since the final purpose of this worldly death is that what

the Creator has placed in human faculty may be actualized and attain to its final purpose through death and when something is actualized it may find immortality; as the final purpose of man's creation is attainment to everlasting life, he will not be subject to annihilation.

Therefore, following the end of the mundane world, all human beings who have seen the light and have passed away successively shall be assembled for everlasting life and shall meet their recompense; otherwise, human existence, even the creation of the world were in vain and acting in vain is far from Divine Threshold.

There is no doubt in it[2] since the point is clear to the knowledgeable, but the ignorant who neither know themselves nor are aware of creation or resurrection and their intellects are entangled with vain desires, nor are they capable of perceiving anything may solely refer to the life after death only if their fathers were brought back to life.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 27

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَخْسَرُ الْمُبْطِلُونَ

27. And to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heaven and the earth. And on the Day that Resurrection will be established – on that Day those talking nonsense shall be losers.

Bringing to life and causing to die is facile for God Almighty, since existence is in His Hands. Worldly losses are trivial, but the losses to be incurred on the Resurrection Day shall be significant. Those who deny Resurrection shall be losers on that day.

The Verse in question is related to the preceding one. God Almighty is the Lord of the heavens and the earth and everything is within the Sway of that Omnipotent King. All the worlds of creation have come into existence from non-existence through His Will. As the All-Praiseworthy God is the Cause of the existence of possible beings, He is the cause of their survival as well. Any alterations may be made in any being through His Omnipotence.

On the Day of Resurrection, this world will turn into the other one and the Day of Resurrection shall be established on which evil doers shall be losers since they spend their life in vanity and ignorance. This world resembles a commercial center and life is the merchant's capital from which he is supposed to accrue otherworldly gains, pure everlasting life, and spiritual stations.

Failure to accrue gains despite the availability of the capital of life to him may be likened to a bankrupt merchant having lost his capital without accruing any gain from his worldly life. There will be nothing in store for him save rue and regret for having lost his capital.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 28

وَتَرَى كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ جَاثِيَةً كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ تُدْعَى إِلَى كِتَابِهَا الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

28. And you will see [***on the Day of Resurrection***] ***each nation humbled to their knees; each nation shall be called to its Record*** [***of deeds***]***. This Day you shall be recompensed for what you used to do.***

On that Day everyone shall kneel down in terror. The system of creation is kept in order and harmony and the records of human deeds are based on evidence.

The blessed Verse is thus addressed to the Prophet (S):

"O Muhammad! You shall see that on that Day each and every nation shall kneel out of fear and each nation shall be called to its Record of deeds."

The clause:

"[***Each nation***] ***shall be called to its Records"***

apparently signifies that when on that Day all mankind shall stay motionless on their knees out of severe fear and anxiety, the Records of their deeds shall be opened and everyone will be called by his own Record of deeds, since on that Day everyone shall be known by his deeds rather than by his name and lineage. Everyone shall be recompensed according to his deeds.

Some have said that everyone shall be called by the Divine Book revealed to the prophet of his time and he will be asked whether he acted upon Its Instructions. A number of points are worthy of note. Jathiya denotes kneeling down at the time of fear, awe, humility, and submission.

According to the Holy Qur'an, three types of Books and Records are mentioned for mankind on the Day of Resurrection:3

There is a Record kept for everyone in which his deeds are recorded:

"And We have fastened every man's deeds to his neck and on the Day of Resurrection We shall bring out for him a book which he will find wide open. [***It shall be said to him***]***: Read your book"***4.

There is a Book for each nation in which social affairs are recorded in it, as the blessed Verse in question reads:

"Each nation shall be called to Its Book."

All nations have one single Book in which everything and the deeds of everyone are recorded in it:

***"And the Book** [**of one's records**] **shall be placed and you shall see the sinners fearful of that which is** [**recorded**] **in it"**[5].*

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 29

هَذَا كِتَابُنَا يَنْطِقُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنْسِخُ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

29. This is Our Book that speaks about you with truth. Indeed, We were recording what you used to do.

There shall be nothing concealed on the Day of Resurrection. Everything shall be put forward. The word kitab connotes that everything shall be written down on that Day.

Again It is God who addresses them emphatically:

"This is Our Book** [**viz. Record**] **that speaks about you with truth"

and reveals your deeds. You could never believe then that your deeds were being recorded somewhere; however, We had commanded [the angels] to record all your deeds.

The word nastansikhu and its verbal noun istinsakh are originally derived from n-s-kh denoting "to erase, take away," e.g. erasing something by something else; for instance, "The sun took away the shade or shadow" (nasakhta al-shams al-dill). The word was later employed to signify "to transcribe" a book from another book without the latter being destroyed.

Some exegets say that

'the Book'

in the Verse may indicate 'Divine Book' revealed to that nation, but

'the Book'

ad hoc is apparently employed in the sense of 'record of deeds' and the majority of exegets accept this view.

According to a tradition narrated from 'Ali (as), the Commander of the Faithful,

"God sends down angels every day to record the deeds of men."

Following the narration of the mentioned tradition in Tibyan[6] under the Verse in question, Shaykh Tusi says:

“By Nastansikhu it is meant that God Almighty commands the angels responsible for recording the deeds to take from this group the deeds worthy of recompense and deed them, but delete the rest, since the first group record all the deeds.”

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 30

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُدْخِلُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِينُ

30. Then as for those who believed** [**in God**] **and did righteous good deeds, their lord shall admit them to His Mercy. That shall be the evident deliverance.

The word fawz used in this Verse denotes triumph and attainment of good together with security and fulfillment of wish. In the Holy Qur’an, the word collocates with evident (mubin) and great (‘adim, kabir).

Instead of “They enter Paradise” (yadkhuluna fial-janna), it is said:

“Their lord shall admit them to His Mercy” (yudkhiluhum rabbuhum fi rahmatihi)

denoting that the believers and the beneficent enjoy Divine Grace and Mercy.

Following an expression of the fact that everyone shall be recompensed according to the record of his deeds, the Verse in question says that the deeds of the believers and the beneficent shall be assayed following which their lord shall admit them to His Infinite Mercy.

Indubitably, this is felicity, merit, deliverance, and the final purpose of mankind rather that of all creatures created for the sake of mankind. It is through the creation of such perfect man that the Divine attribute of Mercy is manifested without which the existence of the world became non-existent.

The Divine Tradition:

“Had it been not for your sake, I would have not created celestial spheres”

is addressed to Prophet Muhammad (S), since the perfect man is the final purpose of the existence of the world.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 31

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَفَلَمْ تَكُنْ آيَاتِي تُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْماً مُجْرِمِينَ

31. But as for those who disbelieved [it shall be said to them: Were not our Verses recited to you? But you were arrogant and you were a people who were sinners.

Sins stem from disbelief and arrogance. Following an expression of the believers' and good doers' sublime station, the blessed Verse, addressing the disbelievers, reproaches them saying that they are entangled with torment and chastisement on the Day of Recompense. Were not Divine Verses recited to them by Divinely appointed Messengers?

Instead of accepting them and finding deliverance from the torment recompensed owing to your own deeds, you ignored the words of the prophets and declined to submit to Divine Command. They were arrogant. Now they are sinners. Whenever the prophets said unto them that Divine promises would be true and there would be no doubt regarding the Resurrection Day, they replied that they had not found it to be true and they disbelieved in such Hour.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verses 32-34

وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَالسَّاعَةُ لا رَيْبَ فِيهَا قُلْتُمْ مَا نَدْرِي مَا السَّاعَةُ إِنْ نَظُنُّ إِلاّ ظَنّاً وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُسْتَيْقِنِينَ

وَبَدَا لَهُمْ سَيِّئَاتُ مَا عَمِلُوا وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ

وَقِيلَ الْيَوْمَ نَنْسَاكُمْ كَمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا وَمَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ

32. And when it was said: "Indeed, Allah's Promise is the truth and there is no doubt about the coming of the Hour," you said: "We know not what is the Hour: we do not think it but as a conjecture, and we have no firm convincing* [*in it*]*."
33. And the evil of what they did shall appear to them, and that which they used to mock at will completely encircle them.
34. And it will be said: "This Day We shall forget you as you forgot the Meeting of this Day of yours. And your abode is the Fire and there is none to help you."

The characteristics of the disbeliever include suspicion and those of the believer include inquiry, follow up, and attainment to certitude. On the Day of Resurrection, in addition to the evil deeds committed, disbelievers shall be encircled by the evil consequences of their evil deeds.

Thus, according to Verse 32, whenever the prophets said unto you that Divine Promises were true and there was no doubt for the establishment of Resurrection, you replied that you did not think it but as a conjecture and you were not firmly convinced in it.

It is mentioned in Verse 33 that their evil deeds committed in their worldly life shall be manifest on the Day of Resurrection. In other words disbelievers failed to perceive their arrogance against and denial of Divine Verses nor did they understand their evil deeds stemming from concupiscence and vain desires.

Thus the muddy water of this world covered their eyes and left them deprived of truth such that they regarded their deeds as desirable unaware of what would be in store for them owing to their derision of Divine Verses.

Verse 34 demonstrates that afflicted by torment disbelievers shall be told by the angels Divinely appointed for their tormenting that Messengers of God reminded you of such a Day but you greeted them with derision. Now that you are desperate, you shall be recompensed by abandoning you to experience everlasting torment in the Hell. There shall be no savior to save you from such torment.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verse 35

ذَلِكُمْ بِأَنَّكُمُ اتَّخَذْتُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُواً وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا فَالْيَوْمَ لا يُخْرَجُونَ مِنْهَا وَلا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ

35. This is because you derided the Divine Verses and the life of the world deceived you. So this Day they shall not be taken out from there [Hell], nor shall they be returned to the worldly life [to seek Divine Satisfaction].

Being deceived and satisfied with mundane life leads man to deride truths. Those who deride Divine Verses shall not find the path of deliverance, nor shall their excuses be justified. The blessed Verse warns disbelievers that this is the recompense for your deriding Divine Verses springing from the fountainhead of Truth and ignoring the words of the prophets.

Allured by mundane life, you forgot your origin and Resurrection. Like as you failed to leave aside your disbelief, you shall not leave the Hell. You may not embark on any desirable act as it is too late and today is the Day of Recompense.

Surah al-Jathiya - Verses 36-37

فَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَرَبِّ الْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

وَلَهُ الْكِبْرِيَاءُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

36. All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, and the Lord of all that exists.
37. The Majesty in the heavens is His, and He is the Omnipotent, the All-Wise.

The One God is the Creator of the heavens, the earth, and all that exists. Verses 36 and 37 indicate that all the praises belong to the Creator of the heavens, the earth, and whatever exists in them including

soul and bodies as well as what exists on the earth from among inanimate beings, plants, and animals. He is the protector of all the worlds.

Generalization following specification indicates generality, i.e., the Creator of the heavens and the earth is the same as the Creator of all the worlds including the mundane world as well as the supernatural worlds of intellects and souls and the infinite worlds existing between them whose number is known by their Creator whose Majesty and Sovereignty are manifest in the heavens and on the earth; He is the Omnipotent Sovereign Who has arranged everything out of Wisdom in harmony with the order of the world.

Thus, Majesty and Magnanimity solely belongs to Him.

It is attested in Divine Traditions that:

"Sovereignty and Majesty solely belongs to My Essence. Whoever vies with Me for these two Attributes, I shall cast him into the Hell."

The words rida' ("cloak") and izar ("shawl") connote Divine Encompassment and Self-Existence; like as cloaks and shawls encompass the body, Divine Essence also encompasses all the worlds and anyone attempting to vie with God for any or both of the twain Attributes shall be cast into the abyss of the Hell.

1. See Raghib's Mufradat.
2. 2:2
3. Tafsir al-Mizan, vol. 13, p. 348.
4. 17:13-14
5. 18:49
6. vol. 9, p. 260

Surah al-Ahqaf, Chapter 46, Verses 1 - 21

(The Curved Sand-Hills)
Section (juz'): 26
Number of Verses: 35

General Contents of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Placed at the beginning of the twenty sixth section of the Qur'an and revealed in Mecca, the Chapter consists of thirty five Verses. The word ahqaf is used in the sense of curved sand hills piled up due to the action of the wind. The land of the people of 'Ad was covered by sand hills, hence the designation of Ahqaf.

The word appears in Verse 21 wherein the story of prophet Hud (Hod) and the people of 'Ad are being mentioned. The Chapter is the last one among the seven Chapters beginning with detached or abbreviated letters HM followed by the revelation and significance of the Qur'an.

Merits of the Chapter

According to a narration narrated by Imam Sadiq (as):

"One who recites Surah al-Ahqaf every night or every week is vouchsafed against the fears of this world and the world to come."

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

حم

تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ

مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلاَّ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُسَمّى وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَمَّا أُنْذِرُوا مُعْرِضُونَ

1. HM.
2. The revelation of [***this***] ***Book is from Allah, the Omnipotent, the All-Wise.***
3. We created neither the heavens nor the earth nor all that is between them except with truth and for an appointed term. But those who disbelieve turn away from that whereof they are warned.

Seven Chapters, namely Ghafir[1], Fussilat[2], Shura[3], Zukhruf[4], Dukhan[5], Jathiya[6], and Ahqaf[7] open with the detached letters HM and are well known as the Seven HMs.

The reiteration of

“HM the revelation of [this] Book”

in a series of recurrent Chapters bears testimony to the fact that fundamental and significant issues are to be reiterated. Divine Glory (‘Izza) is one of the attributes of Allah, His Book[8], His Messenger (S), and believers[9]. Divine Creation is based on Wisdom and Truth.

Encountering things of whose existential mysteries we are unaware may not affect the Creator but it stems from the restrictions of our knowledge as it is mentioned in the Holy Qur’an:

“We have not created the heavens, the earth, and all that is between them for mere play. We created them not except with truth; however, most of them know not”[10].

A meager attempt at attending to the verses following the detached letters HM leads us to the fact that the Qur’an is from the springhead of Divine Omniscience, Glory, Omnipotence, and Wisdom. It is the source of Blessing, Bounty, and Grace. It is Illuminating and pondering on it leads one to intellection. The revelation of the Qur’an is merely possible from Omnipotent and All-Wise God, lying beyond the limited human power.

The second Verse, besides the Book of Compilation (tadwin), deals with the Book of Creation, making mention of the glory and truth of the heavens and the earth saying:

“We created neither the heavens nor the earth nor all that is between them except with truth.”

There is no single untrue word in His Book nor is there any unharmonious and untrue thing in His System of Creation. Everything is well calculated and stands in perfect harmony according to truth.

However, the world of creation has an end as it has a beginning.

In this vein, the Verse further adds:

“We have appointed a term for it,”

upon which the transient world will come to its end. Since this world is true and purposeful, there should naturally exist another world in which deeds be recompensed. Therefore, the truthfulness of this world bears testimony to the existence of resurrection, or else it would have been vain and abounding in wrong and oppression.

Despite the Truth of the Qur’an and the creation of the world,

“those who disbelieve turn away from that whereof they are warned.”

On the one hand, Qur’anic Verses recurrently warn them of the Great Tribunal awaiting them and on the other hand, the world of creation, with certain orders of its, warns the negligent that everything shall be reckoned; nonetheless, they heed neither of the twain warnings.

The present participle mu'ridhun "turning away," from the root '-r-dh, demonstrates that attending to the Ayat ("Verses; Signs") of creation and compilation may enable one to comprehend the Truth; however, they turn away from Truth lest that it may not affect their passions and lusts."

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 4

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقُوا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ أَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ ائْتُونِي بِكِتَابٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ هَٰذَا أَوْ أَثَارَةٍ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

4. Say: "Think you about all that you invoke besides Allah? Show me. What have they created of the earth? Or have they a share in [***the creation of***] ***the heavens? Bring a trace of knowledge*** [***to substantiate your claims***] ***if you are truthful!"***

The word Athara denotes the traces and tokens of the existence of something. The logic of Divine Oneness rests on such firm and indubitable grounds that it may be used in debates with disbelievers to defeat them.

In this vein, Imam Baqir (as) says:

"The word

'Book'

in this Verse denotes the Torah and the Bible and the word

'knowledge'

signifies the words of the prophets' successors."

The Prophet (S) in all matters related to his prophethood, even the manner of debate with opponents, acts upon Divine Command.

Addressing the Noble Prophet (S), thus God Almighty says in this blessed Verse:

"O Muhammad! Ask those worshipping false deities believing in their power to show Me what they have created on the earth thanks to which they have become worthy of being worshipped and thanked.

Do they have any share in the creation of the heavens? Bring a book unto Me preceding the Qur'an to substantiate your claim. Ask them to show the tokens of their knowledge, if they are true in claiming the veracity of their godhead."

The Verse in question indicates the logical argument produced to make disbelievers comprehend that each and every claimant produces arguments to substantiate his claims and each being has its own

tokens. It is particularly true about those standing higher on the hierarchy of being. What characteristics have they found in the false deities in which disbelievers have sought refuge and before them they prostrate themselves invoking them to answer their prayers?

They merely fancy that they have made themselves close to such worthless objects. Have they created anything ex nihilo to demonstrate that it stands within their power? Have they shown any extraordinary knowledge? Have you learned that they are related to heavenly beings?

The fact is that they lack any merits or privileges, but they are worthless, inanimate objects fashioned by you who claim to be sensible, knowledgeable, and humane. It stands against reason to seek refuge in inanimate things.

In short, the Verse in question bears testimony to Its Divine Origin demonstrating that whatever exists in the heavens and the earth and all things between them have come to light through Truth and the Source of Truth and the Verse substantiates Divine Oneness;

(***“No one affects existence save Allah”***)

and everything is from Him and is dependent on the Sublime Intellect. They are all needful of the Absolute Self-Sufficient Being.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verses 5-6

وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ يَدْعُو مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَنْ لا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَهُمْ عَنْ دُعَائِهِمْ غَافِلُونَ

وَإِذَا حُشِرَ النَّاسُ كَانُوا لَهُمْ أَعْدَاءً وَكَانُوا بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ كَافِرِينَ

5. And he who is more astray than one who invokes [***ones***] ***besides Allah who will not answer him till the Day of Resurrection and who are unaware of their being invoked?***
6. And when mankind are gathered, they will become their enemies and will deny their worshipping.

The worst error is deviation from true recognition and one who turns away from the Omnipotent, Omniscient, All-Hearing, and All-Seeing God and turns to false deities will be entangled with such error, since none but God Almighty may embark upon doing anything. Polytheistic and mundane ties shall turn into animosity on the Resurrection Day.

The blessed Verse is a reproach to idolaters treading the path of error and astrayness to the extreme since they are deeply sunk in ignorance to the extent that they invoke the succor of false deities and objects of worship:

"other than Allah"

including angels, jinn, and prophets. The Verse is a reference to the fact that the only true object of worship and the Provider of Needs (qadhi al-hajat) is God. According to the second Verse, whatever has been regarded as their object of worship and support turn into their enemies on the Day of Resurrection.

At the end, attention may be paid to the differences between God and false deities in the life of mankind:

The Role of God in the Life of Mankind

"He is the Creator"[11].

"He is the Lord all that exists"[12].

"Allah is full of kindness toward mankind"[13].

"He is the All-Hearer of invocation"[14].

"He responds to the distressed"[15].

"He will surely guide them to His Paths"[16].

"He provides the pious with support"[17].

"He guides them unto growth"[18].

"The hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah"[19].

"He has taught [***man***] ***by the pen"***[20].

"If man thanks, He will give him more [***of His Blessings***]***"***[21].

"And when I am ill, it is He who cures me"[22].

"And Who, I hope, will forgive me my faults on the Day of Recompense"[23].

The Role of Deities Other Than God in the Life of Mankind

They have no power over creation "They cannot create [***even***] ***a fly"***[24].

"They are unaware of their invocations to them"[25].

"They do not hear his invocation"[26].

"They have no power to remove the adversity from you"[27].

"They are their enemies."

"They are unable to ward off adversity from you"[28].

"They harm them and profit them not"[29].

To sum it up, mention may be made of Yusuf's (Joseph) words to his fellow inmates:

"Are many different lords [***gods***] ***better or Allah, the One, the Irresistible?"***[30].

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 7

وَإِذَا تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ

7. And when Our Clear Verses are recited to them, the disbelievers say of the truth when it reaches them: "This is plain magic!"

Dominance of obduracy leads to the denial of the Clear Signs, i.e. the illuminating Qur'anic Verses. The obdurate regarded the prophets' miracles incredible, but interesting and weird;

(***"This is plain magic!"***).

The Verse in question demonstrates that disbelievers regarded Qur'anic Verses as extraordinary since despite the fact that the Holy Qur'an was revealed in eloquent Arabic and Arab polytheists were speakers of the Arabic tongue, they knew that composing such Verses were beyond them; nonetheless, the prejudice predominant at the time of pre-Islamic ignorance in Arabia and the arrogance and vanity deeply rooted in the hearts of polytheists impeded them from believing in the prophethood of the Seal of the Prophets (S) and confessing that It is the Word of God, so that whenever they heard a Verse, they attributed magic and sorcery to the Noble Prophet (S).

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 8

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ إِنِ افْتَرَيْتُهُ فَلا تَمْلِكُونَ لِي مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئاً هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ كَفَى بِهِ شَهِيداً بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

8. Or they say: "He has fabricated it." Say: "If I have fabricated it still you have no power to support me against [***the Wrath of***] ***Allah. He knows best of what you say*** [***engage in debates***] ***among yourselves concerning it! He is sufficient as a witness between me and you! And He is the Forgiving, the Most Merciful."***

The verbal form tufidhun is from the root f-w-dh ("to enter, to flow"). If someone falsely claims to be a prophet, God shall disgrace him and no one may impede his disgrace and support him against God. Obduracy and impiety result in diverse contradictory words and conducts.

It is mentioned in the preceding Verse that polytheists and disbelievers claimed that the Qur'an was magic and he Prophet (S) was a liar.

Addressing the Prophet (S), the Verse says unto him:

"O Muhammad (S)! Do disbelievers produce such false claims saying that the Qur'an is your own fabrication?

God bids you to respond to them saying:

'If I fabricate the Qur'an for your guidance and attribute it to Divine Revelation, you shall have no power to do anything to my benefit and save me from torment. God knows better as to what you say, viz. your criticism and mockery regarding Divine Verses. God is sufficient for me to be a witness between us. He is Most Forgiving and Most Merciful.'"

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 9

قُلْ مَا كُنْتُ بِدْعاً مِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَمَا أَدْرِي مَا يُفْعَلُ بِي وَلا بِكُمْ إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلاّ مَا يُوحَى إِلَيَّ وَمَا أَنَا إِلاّ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ

9. Say: "I am not unprecedented among the Messengers nor do I know what will be done with me or with you. I only follow that which is revealed to me and I am but a plain warner."

The word bid' indicates something novel and unprecedented. The Noble Prophet's (S) opponents reacted as if no prophets preceded him and his prophethood is something novel. The Prophet utters solely the Divine Word and practically follows nothing save the Divine Revelation. Therefore, his words and conduct may serve as a model for mankind. Divinely appointed guides, even in substantiating their truthfulness, act upon Divine Command.

The Verse in question says:

"O Muhammad (S)! Say unto the disbelievers that you are not the first divinely appointed prophet. You are not unaware of the preceding prophets so as to regard my prophethood as falsity, but God Almighty, out of His Grace and Mercy appoints prophets and messengers at all times to provide mankind with Divine Guidance."

By saying:

"I am unaware as to what God shall do with me and you,"

it may be meant that the Prophet (S), despite his sublime station of prophethood, is not fully aware of Divine Ordainments, but admits that Omnipotence solely belongs to God and he does not command or forbid people out of his taste, but he is totally obedient to Divine Revelation.

He is Divinely appointed to fulfill his mission and his claim does not transgress prophethood. In the same vein, he does not consider himself to be independent in judgment and discretion. He is appointed to apprise people of their evil deeds and warn them against the torment in store for them out of evil deeds as a recompense of their vices.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 10

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَكَفَرْتُمْ بِهِ وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرائِيلَ عَلَى مِثْلِهِ فَآمَنَ وَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

10. Say: "Tell me! If this** [**Qur'an**] **is from Allah and you deny it, and a witness to it from among the Children of Israel testifies that this Qur'an is like it and he believed while you are too proud** [**to believe**]**." Verily, Allah guides not the people who are wrong doers.

Wrong doing impedes insight and results in deprivation from Divine Grace.

In the blessed Verse in question, God says:

"O Muhammad (S)! Ask them to inform you of their sayings. If this Qur'an is Revealed by God and a witness from the Children of Israel bears witness to its veracity but you waxed proud and disbelieved in it, what will be in store for you? Are you not from among wrong doers? God shall not guide wrong doers."

It is reported that by

"witness"

(shahid) 'Abd Allah ibn Salam is being meant. He was one of the ascetics and scholars of the Children of Israel. By "like it" (mithlihi) the verses and meanings of the Torah are being intended that testify to the Qur'an as Divine Revelation and is consistent with it in terms of Divine Teachings and Promises and Threats.

In short, the Verse signifies that the Noble Prophet (S) is Divinely appointed by God to provide the Jews with guidance saying that as per the testimony of their own scholars it is substantiated that the Qur'an is Divine Revelation but they deny it out of their vanity. Are they not wrong doers? Sunk in wrong doing, they are not guidable.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 11

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَوْ كَانَ خَيْراً مَا سَبَقُونَا إِلَيْهِ وَإِذْ لَمْ يَهْتَدُوا بِهِ فَسَيَقُولُونَ هَذَا إِفْكٌ قَدِيمٌ

11. And those who disbelieve say of those who believe: "Had it [the Islamic faith] been a good thing, they would not have preceded us thereto!" And when they have not let themselves be guided by it, they say: "This is an ancient lie!"

The enemy does not enter from one single way and his words and logic are not in the same vein.

At times he says:

"Islam is worthless or else we would have preceded in embracing it. He sometimes says the call to embrace the Islamic faith is an age old and precedent lie."

The blessed Verse addresses either the disbelievers from Quraysh or the Jews or disbelievers in general who were the Noble Prophet's (S) contemporaries. Since they regarded themselves as wealthy, noble, magnanimous, scholars, and knowledgeable, they considered the Noble Prophet's (S) poor Companions, e.g. 'Ammar, Suhayb, and Ibn Mas'ud as unworthy and weakling.

To persuade the believers they said unto them that had there been merits and felicity in following Muhammad (S), we would have preceded you in embracing the Islamic faith. According to the blessed Verse, since disbelievers did not find their way toward felicity and merits and were deprived of guidance and their vanity and prejudice impeded their hearts from being enlightened by the Qur'anic light and admitting the true source of the Qur'an, they pretend ignorance and say this Qur'an is a fabrication attributed by Muhammad (S) to God.

The content of the Verse resembles one[31] as per which disbelievers said that the Qur'an is nothing save ancient lies (in hadha asatir al-awwalin).

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 12

وَمِنْ قَبْلِهِ كِتَابُ مُوسَى إِمَاماً وَرَحْمَةً وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِسَاناً عَرَبِيّاً لِيُنْذِرَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُحْسِنِينَ

12. And before this was the Scripture of Musa (Moses) as a guide and a mercy. And this is a confirming Book in the Arabic tongue to warn those who do wrong and as glad tidings to good doers.

Revelation of the Divine Book is a Divine tradition

(*“And before this was the Scripture of Musa”*).

Through the glad tidings included in preceding Scriptures, the Holy Qur’an confirms them.

The antecedent of

“before this”

is the Holy Qur’an which is preceded by Torah, the Scripture of Musa which had been Divinely Revealed as the precursor of all Divine Scriptures as a Mercy demonstrating the Path of Guidance through the Books of the Torah.

This Book, namely the Qur’an, which is revealed in the eloquent Arabic tongue confirms what is included in the Torah and other Divine Books so that it may inspire awe in disbelievers as to the torments of this world and the world to come and threaten disbelievers and polytheists and bear the glad tidings of Paradise and the stations prepared for them as rewards of the good deeds to the pious and the beneficent.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verses 13-14

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا فَلا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

13. Indeed those who say: “Our Lord is Allah,” and thereafter stand firm and straight [***on the Islamic faith of Monotheism***]***, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.***
14. Such shall be the dwellers of Paradise, abiding therein [***for ever***] ***– a reward for what*** [***good deeds***] ***they used to do.***

To say

“our Lord is Allah”

signifies nothing by its mere form, but it connotes the choice of the True Path and standing firm on It. It is hard to stand firm on the True Path, but it turns facile through a great reward like Paradise abounding in bounties and devoid of grief. Thus hard tasks turn more convenient though great rewards.

After threatening opponents and bearing glad tidings to the beneficent believers, the blessed Verse enumerates the qualities of believers standing firm on the True Path and the rewards to fall into their share through their good deeds. Good doers (muhsinin) are those who utter their belief, confirm from the bottom of their hearts, and stand firm on the Path of True Religion in terms of faith and practice.

They need not fear of what is in store for them nor do they grieve as to their past deeds.

Needlessness of fear and grief by believers standing firm on the Path may refer to fears and grieves in the other worldly matters. On the Resurrection Day, they stand near to God and are saved from the great distress there.

They neither fear of torment nor are they grieved since as per the Verse in question, negation of fear and grief from the beneficent may include their mundane life and that to come, since one who fears God fears no one but is enclosed within the enclosure of:

“There is no god but Allah”

(La ilaha illa ‘llah).

He does not grieve since one who loves God and seeks meeting his Lord may not be grieved from mundane matters but such a person has joined those regarding whom it is said:

“God is satisfied with them and they are [satisfied] with Him.”

It is worthy of note that it is solely through clemency and perseverance that man may attain to perfect faith and certitude. It is not sufficient to utter the declaration of the faith verbally and confirm it by heart in order to attain to perfect faith.

The perfect believer is one who admits no impediments in his way attains to the station of certitude by sight (‘ayn al-yaqin) or real certitude (haq al-yaqin). Such attainment is possible through firm will to act. To put it short, perfect faith depends on clemency, perseverance, and standing firm so that one may struggle against his concupiscence and ward off devils such that angels may find their ways into his heart and he may attain to the station of peaceful soul (nafs al-mutma’inna).

Such a person may be termed as perfect believer and as per the Verse in question; there will be no fear or grief for him.

The second Verse in question makes mention of another merit of good doers and those standing firm on the Path of Faith, as per which they are from among the dwellers of Paradise for good as a reward for their good deeds in this world, admitting to Divine Oneness, standing firm in their faith without any instability in their certitude and faith in their mundane life. Paradise is the reward of those who act rather than those who merely talk.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 15

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَاناً حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهاً وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهاً وَحَمْلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ ثَلاثُونَ شَهْراً حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ
وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَى وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحاً تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ

لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

15. And We have enjoined on man to be dutiful and kind to his parents. His mother bears him with hardship. And she brings him forth with hardship, and the bearing of him, and the weaning of him [***lasts***] ***thirty months, till when he attains full strength and reaches forty years, he says: "My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your Favor which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds, such as please You, and make my offspring good. Truly, I have turned to You in repentance, and truly, I am one of the Muslims*** [***submitting to Your Will***]***.***

Being dutiful and kind to one's parents is highly rewarded by God.

The phrase:

"We enjoined"

is attested five times in the Qur'an three instances of which are employed for parents[32]. Owing to the hardships of pregnancy, delivery, and suckling, mothers enjoy a special privilege and deserve further kindness. It is noteworthy that being dutiful and kind to one's parents does not depend on their being Muslims.

The basis of man's life and his felicity and improvement rests on unanimity, kindness, and philanthropy and his closest relations are his parents who partially form his material existence. That is why God Almighty enjoins man to do good to his parents.

In this vein, motherly love for her child is one of the wonders of the world and one of the secrets of creation, since despite suffering so many hardships and so much pain, however her child be ugly in form or character, her love never turns into disgust. She bears the child for a period of nine months and her delivery is very painful. She suckles her child.

According to the Verse, such activities last thirty months. Therefore, compared with fathers, mothers suffer further hardships; however, fathers undergo many hardships for their children in other respects. In bringing up their children, parents undergo many a hardship to provide for their children's provisions and education until their children reach majority.

The verse connotes guidance through intellect since any fair individual knows through their reason that they are dutiful against their parents and the verse stands on such rational command.

The Qur'an[33] says:

"Is there any reward for good other than good?"

which is a reference to the rational command in question.

However, when we compare this Verse with:

"And worship Allah and do not associate false deities with Him in any way and do good to your parents"[34]

which is attested in four Qur'nic Chapters for the sake of emphasis and we take the large number of traditions and narrations narrated from the Infallibles (as) we notice that the number is so large that enumerating all of them will run to many a page.

Taking the Qur'anic Verses and the traditions and narrations bears testimony to the fact that as per Divine Command doing good to one's parents is on a par with worshipping God based on which it is obligatory to be dutiful to one's parents and obey them unless their commands be inconsistent with Divine Commands and those of His Messenger.

It is incumbent upon every individual to make every attempt to do good to them and obtain their satisfaction at all times and to the extent possible to do so since obedience to them and obtaining their satisfaction are on a par with obedience to God and obtaining Divine Satisfaction.

Man attains to the perfect state of physical and mental development when he is forty years of age. It clearly demonstrates whether he treads the path of felicity or is astray.

Thus God Almighty says that within a period of forty years, man may proceed on the path of felicity and thus say in a state of need and gratitude:

"Bestow upon me the blessing that I may be grateful for the abounding material and immaterial bounties granted to me and my parents and as a token of gratitude act upon Your Satisfaction."

Such individual not only invokes God to respond to his needs but also seeks felicity and welfare for his offspring.

He turns to the threshold of the Absolute Self-Sufficient God and sincerely addresses God saying:

"I have turned toward you. I have submitted to Your Will and Command."

Experts of Islamic law have employed:

"the bearing of him and the weaning of him [***lasts***] ***thirty months"***

and

"the mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years"[35]

to conclude that pregnancy in the least lasts six months which together with two months of suckling amount to thirty months.

Surah al-Ahqaf – Verse 16

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعْدَ الصِّدْقِ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ

16. They are those from whom We shall accept the best of their deeds and overlook their evil deeds. [They shall be] among the dwellers of Paradise – [this Paradise is] a promise of truth, which they have been promised.

The value of deeds lies in their being accepted;

(***"They are those from whom We shall accept …"***).

For instance, being dutiful and doing good to one's parents and being grateful to God leads to the acceptance of one's good deeds and being dutiful to and doing good to one's parents and gratitude toward God results in Divine Forgiving.

"They"

in this Verse refers to the people some of whose qualities are enumerated in the preceding Verse. The Verse in question makes mention of their good deeds and intentions accepted by God better than what they have done. God forgives their sins and has promised them to enter Paradise. His Promise is true and shall be fulfilled.

The Verse indicates that such Grace and Mercy are the rewards of three good deeds of theirs:

1. Being dutiful and doing good to one's parents

2. Their invocation and supplication to the Absolute Self-Sufficient for the bounties granted to them and their parents

3. Their repentance and turning away from opposition to embracing the Islamic faith in case of committing any sin or fault, since invocation and supplication at the Threshold of the Omnipotent God as well as repentance from committing sins and faults serve as two gates of Divine Mercy and Grace.

Mention will be made of a number of traditions concerning showing respect for parents:

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"The most significant Divine obligation is to do good to one's parents."[36]

The Messenger of Allah (S) Said:

"Any good doing child who looks at his parents out of kindness is granted the Divine Reward of

pilgrimage to Ka'ba for each and every look. He was asked concerning a child who looks kindly at his parents one hundred times a day and he replied: "God is the Greatest and the Most Pure"[37].

The Messenger of Allah (S) Said:

"A servant who is obedient to his parents and God shall dwell on the highest place in Paradise"[38].

The Messenger of Allah (S) Said:

"One who obtains the satisfaction of his parents, has gained the satisfaction of God and one who angers his parents, angers God"[39].

The Messenger of Allah (S) Said:

"One who wishes to have his life prolonged and his daily sustenance increased should do good to his parents and provide for his blood relatives"[40].

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verses 17-18

وَالَّذِي قَالَ لِوَالِدَيْهِ أُفٍّ لَكُمَا أَتَعِدَانِنِي أَنْ أُخْرَجَ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ الْقُرُونُ مِنْ قَبْلِي وَهُمَا يَسْتَغِيثَانِ اللَّهَ وَيْلَكَ آمِنْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَيَقُولُ مَا هَذَا إِلاّ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا خَاسِرِينَ

17. But he who says to his parents: "Fie upon you both! Do you hold out the promise to me that I shall be raised up** [**from the grave posthumously**] **when generations before me have passed away?" While they invoke Allah for help** [**and say unto him**]**: "Woe to you! Believe! Verily, the Promise of Allah is true." But he says: "This** [**promise**] **is nothing but the tales of the ancient."
18. They are those against whom the Word** [**of torment**] **is justified among the previous generations of Jinn and mankind that have passed away. Indeed, they are ever the losers.

Unworthy children insult their parents;

(***"Fie upon you both!"***)

but faithful and compassionate parents seek God's assistance to guide their children and ask them to do good deeds and keep away from vices.

In the Verse in question, mention is made of unfaithful and ungrateful individuals who are cursed by their parents:

"He who says to his parents: 'Fie upon you both! Do you hold out the promise to me that I shall be raised up when generations before me have passed away?'"

Faithful parents do not desist before their obdurate son,

"they invoke Allah for help [***and say unto him***]***: 'Woe to you! Believe! Verily, the Promise of Allah is true.'"***

But he says:

"This [***promise***] ***is nothing but the tales of the ancient."***

What you say concerning the Last Day and Reckoning is superstitions and legends of the ancients and I shall never submit to believing them.

The qualities enumerated in this Verse concerning such obdurate individuals are as follows:

1. disrespect toward parents, since

"Fie"

refers to impurities and connotes insult and humiliation.[41]

2. Such people not only disbelieve in the Last Day but also mock such belief and regard it on a par with legends and superstitions

3. Enjoining them to embrace the true faith falls onto deaf ears as they do not submit to the Divine Will and they are conceited with false pride and ignorance. Compassionate parents make every attempt to rescue their obdurate children from the abyss of ignorance and the painful torment in the world to come; however, the unworthy children persist in their disbelief and their parents find no other alternative but to leave them.

According to Verse 18:

"Obdurate disbelievers are those against whom the Word [of torment] is justified among the previous generations of Jinn and mankind that have passed away. Indeed, they are ever the losers [viz. they shall suffer the painful chastisement and shall abide in Hell].

The reason is that they are all losers. What loss is worse that losing all one's capabilities and gaining the Divine Wrath? In comparing the dwellers of Paradise and Hell in these Verses we notice that one group attain to growth and development and the other loss all their capabilities and turn into losers.

The former are grateful to God and their parents but the latter are ungrateful and show their disrespect to their parents. The former shall abide in Paradise near to God and the latter are the dwellers of Hell to

abide there among faithless people.

Each of them joins their lot. The former repent of their sins and faults and submit to the Will of God and the latter are rebels sunken in false pride. It is to be noted that the latter are obdurate in their deviation from the true path and rely on their predecessors and shall be raised up in Hell with their likes."

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 19

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَاتٌ مِمَّا عَمِلُوا وَلِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَهُمْ لا يُظْلَمُونَ

19. And for all** [**viz. Jinn and mankind, the preceding and coming generations**]**, there will be degrees according to that which they did, that He may recompense them in full for their deeds. And they will not be wronged.

Divine degrees and stations are consistent with human deeds. Resurrection shall be a reward for the faithful and a chastisement for evil doers

(***"He may recompense them in full for their deeds"***).

"And"

(wa) in

"and for all"

(wa li-kulli) refers to the last two Verses; the former concerns those who embrace the true faith and submit to the Divine Will following their maturity and development invoking God to grant success to them and their parents, repenting their evil deeds and turning to God Almighty and the latter concerns those who showed disrespect for their parents and denied the veracity of the Resurrection Day. Each of them shall be granted degrees of ascension consistent with their deeds.

Every act shall be recompensed in full and no one shall be wronged.

The Qur'an says:

فمن يعمل مثقال ذره خيرا يره و من يعمل مثقال ذره شرا يره

"So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom shall see it and whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom shall see it"[42].

In short, the Verse apparently refers to the fact that degrees are the results of deeds and since people

are quite different in their deeds, their degrees are quite different. Each and every individual's degree is determined by his qualities and morals acquired by himself in his mundane life.

Surah al-Ahqaf – Verse 20

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى النَّارِ أَذْهَبْتُمْ طَيِّبَاتِكُمْ فِي حَيَاتِكُمُ الدُّنْيَا وَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهَا فَالْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْسُقُونَ

20. On the Day when those who disbelieve will be exposed to the Fire** [**it shall be said**]**: "You received your good things in the life of the world, and you took your pleasure therein** [**without saving anything for this day**]**. Now this Day you shall be recompensed with a torment of humiliation, because you were arrogant in the land without a right, and because you used to rebel against Allah's Command.

Diverse physical and mental torments shall be in store for evil doers on the Resurrection Day beginning posthumously with reproach, humiliation, losing one's capabilities and bounties, and regretting their loss.

Concerning the manner of dying, Imam 'Ali (as) in Nahj al-Balagha says:

"In his last minute, man thinks about what he has done in his lifetime (fi-ma afani 'umrahu)"[43].

The blessed Verse in question treats of the manner of torments of the Resurrection Day, when disbelievers are exposed to Hell fire. It will be said unto them that the bounties granted to you in your mundane life, e.g. outward ones like health, property and wealth, delicious food and inward ones such as intellect, intelligence, and bravery were spent inappropriately rather than employing them for the attainment of felicity, virtue, and perfection.

You spent them on the pleasures of the flesh and as a consequence of ingratitude for such blessings, disobedience against Divine Command you will pay for your ingratitude by suffering from a humiliating torment (jaza'an wifaqan). Since recompense is supposed to be consistent with deeds, false pride and vicious conduct shall be chastised by humiliating torment ('adhab al-hawn).

Surah al-Ahqaf – Verse 21

وَاذْكُرْ أَخَا عَادٍ إِذْ أَنْذَرَ قَوْمَهُ بِالْأَحْقَافِ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ النُّذُرُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ

21. And remember** [**Hud**] **the brother of 'Ad, when he warned his people in Ahqaf. And surely, there have passed away warners before him and after him** [**saying**]**: Worship none but Allah;

truly, I fear for you the torment of a mighty Day."

The proper noun Ahqaf is from hiqf ("flowing sand") is applied to a region covered by sand in the South of the Arabian Peninsula located between the Yemen, Oman, and Aden in which the people of 'Ad dwelt (cf. Tahqiq fi Kalimat al-Qur'an).

Addressing His Messenger in this Verse, God says:

"Remember 'Ad's brother [***namely Prophet Hud*** (***as***)]***."***

It is said that Hud (as) was 'Ad's brother by blood or from the latter's tribe. Hud (as) was asked to inspire awe in his Bedouin tribe and threaten them.

God Almighty appointed Hud (as) as His Messenger to encourage the people of 'Ad to worship the One God saying unto them:

"Do not worship any god other than the One God. I fear for you the torment of a mighty Day."

1. 40
2. 41
3. 42
4. 43
5. 44
6. 45
7. 46
8. 41:41
9. 63:8
10. 44:38-39; 40:2-3; 41:2-4; 42:3-5; 43:2-3, 6; 44:3
11. 55:3
12. 1:2
13. 2:143
14. 3:38
15. 27:62
16. 29:69
17. 38:2
18. 13:28
19. 13:28
20. 96:4
21. 14:7
22. 26:80
23. 26:82
24. 22:73
25. 46:5
26. 35:14
27. 17:56
28. 17:56
29. 2:102

30. 12:39
31. 6:25
32. 29:8; 31: 14; 46:15
33. 55:60
34. 4:40
35. 2:233
36. Mizan al-Hikma, vol. 10, pp. 7-9
37. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 74, p.73
38. Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. 16, p. 467
39. Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. 16, p. 470
40. Kanz al-'Ummal, p. 16, p. 475
41. cf. Raghib's Mufradat
42. 99:7-8
43. Sermon 109

Surah al-Ahqaf, Verses 22 - 35

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verses 22-23

قَالُوا أجِئْتَنَا لِتَأْفِكَنَا عَنْ آلِهَتِنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

قَالَ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأُبَلِّغُكُمْ مَا أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ وَلَكِنِّي أَرَاكُمْ قَوْماً تَجْهَلُونَ

22. They** [**the people of 'Ad to Prophet Hud**] **said: "Have you come to turn us away from our gods? Then bring us that with which you threaten us, if you are one the truthful!"
23. He said: "The knowledge** [**of the time of Resurrection**] **is with Allah only. And I convey to you that wherewith I have been sent, but I see that you are a people given to ignorance!"

At times polytheism and disbelief appear so true that monotheism and belief are considered to be deviation from the right path. Requesting the prophet to bring torment upon them rather than pondering on the True Word is a token of ignorance.

Such obdurate people stood against Divine Invitation and said unto Hud:

"Have you come to turn us away from our gods with your lies. Then bring us that with which you threaten us, if you are one of the truthful!"

The two sentences clearly demonstrate the deviation and obduracy of this disobedient people. According

to the former, they say that Hud's call to Monotheism is false since it is against their common practice regarding their objects of worship passed down to them from their forefathers. In the latter, they request the prophet to bring torment upon them, a torment which will be totally irreversible.

In response to their unwise request, Hud says:

"The knowledge is with Allah only. He is the only One who knows when and under what circumstances the torment shall be brought forth whose occurrence shall be irrelevant to their request or his will and desire. The purpose is giving the ultimatum since Divine Wisdom requires the same. He further adds that it is his duty to convey to them that wherewith he has been sent.

It is his responsibility but they are to decide concerning obeying God and it rests upon His Will to bring torment upon them. However, he sees that they are a people given to ignorance. Their misfortune has its roots in their ignorance that together with obduracy and false pride impedes them from giving their ears to the Messengers of God and makes you persist in requesting God to send down His torment upon them and cause their annihilation. Had they been aware in the least, they would have thought about the realization of the threat."

The people were indifferent toward Hud's (as) words and Divine Promise and Threat but waxed their disobedience. According to Qur'an exegets, God Almighty sent down famine and three years passed without a single drop of rain so that they may take a lesson.

Prophet Hud (as) asked them to believe in Monotheism so that God may send down rain or else Divine torment would be brought upon them. At the end and out of dire necessity they sought refuge in Ka'ba which was merely a pile of red sand at the time. A certain adherent of Hud (as) asked them to believe in Hud's prophethood in order to save themselves from the disaster, but they ignored him and put him in prison.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verses 24-25

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ عَارِضاً مُسْتَقْبِلَ أَوْدِيَتِهِمْ قَالُوا هَذَا عَارِضٌ مُمْطِرُنَا بَلْ هُوَ مَا اسْتَعْجَلْتُمْ بِهِ رِيحٌ فِيهَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

تُدَمِّرُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا لا يُرَى إِلاّ مَسَاكِنُهُمْ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

24. When they saw it as a dense cloud coming toward their valleys, they said: "This is a cloud bringing us rain!" Nay, but he [***Hud***] ***said that it is that*** [***torment***] ***which you were asking to be hastened – a wind wherein is a painful torment!***
25. Destroying everything by the Command of its Lord! So they became such that nothing could be seen except their dwellings! Thus do We recompense the people who are sinners.

The word ‘Aridh denotes a cloud appearing in the sky covering the horizon all over. Awdiya is the plural form of wadi (“valley; dwelling place”). Having faced severe famine and having awaited rain for long, the people of ‘Ad were gladdened to see the cloud in the sky but later on they found out that the cloud was not a harbinger of felicity but one of misfortune. It was the torment sought desirously and hastily by them.

Seeing three clouds in the sky, the people of ‘Ad thought that they would bring rain, but they were mistaken. Au contraire, they led to their annihilation. It was the same severe torment of which prophet Hud (as) had informed them and said that had they not believed in Monotheism and had they worshipped the One God, they would have not suffered from the severe torment.

However, they were too ignorant to believe him and said that if he had been in the right he would have brought that severe torment upon them. According to the exegets, the cloud contained a wind which blew so hard that they were desperate and their property and animals were scattered and they were annihilated as well.

As per a narration recorded in Manhaj and narrated on the authority of ‘Amr ibn Maymun, the wind blew so hard that it took the tents and the camels with their litters to the sky like grasshoppers jumping up.

According to another narration, the first person to notice the torment was a woman who said:

“I see a wind blowing and blazing with flames.”

Hud (as) took away the believers from among the disbelievers. The wind invigorated the believers and softened their bodies and they enjoyed its blow.

The fact is that all creatures are the Divine Host at His Command. They are the enemies of God’s enemies and the friends of God’s friends. If they do not turn away from God’s enemies for a while we should know that God works in mysterious ways and the Creator has granted them respite so that the world may be refashioned.

It is said that when the people of ‘Ad were desperate with the harsh wind blowing, they sought refuge in their houses and closed the doors thinking that they could save themselves from God’s torment.

The wind blew harsher and pulled out the doors. It blew for seven days and nights and embraced them beneath the piles of sand in Ahqaf so that they were hidden beneath them and were annihilated:

“such that nothing could be seen except their dwellings!”

According to Verse 25, following the occurrence of the harsh disaster, no trace was seen of the people of ‘Ad but their houses and dwelling places. It becomes evident that when the wind subsided, their dead bodies had also disappeared, since it is said that the wind hurled them toward the mounts so that their bodies were destroyed.

Thus is the chastisement decreed for the sinners. If God wills, they have to meet the recompense of their vices so that others may take a lesson.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 26

وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِيمَا إِنْ مَكَّنَّاكُمْ فِيهِ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ سَمْعاً وَأَبْصَاراً وَأَفْئِدَةً فَمَا أَغْنَى عَنْهُمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَلا أَبْصَارُهُمْ وَلا أَفْئِدَتُهُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِذْ كَانُوا يَجْحَدُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ

26. And verily We had firmly established them with that wherewith We have not established you! And We had assigned them hearing, seeing, and hearts; but their hearing, seeing, and their hearts availed them nothing since they used to deny the Signs of Allah, and they were [finally] completely encircled by that which they used to mock at!

To have access to facilities necessitates making efforts, but they all belong to God:

(***"And verily We had firmly established them"***).

In ad hoc indicates negation and is addressed to Meccans signifying:

"O people of Quraysh! The people of 'Ad were better than you in terms of property, wealth, power, high stature, and perseverance."

It is said that they were so powerful that they would built houses out of mountain rocks. God had provided them with such wealth and power that they were superior to Quraysh in this respect. In ad hoc may be taken as a particle referring to the fact that the people of 'Ad, despite their strength, power, high stature, and lofty and fortified dwellings were unable to stay unharmed from the harsh wind blowing as a result of Divine Wrath.

How could you who are weaker than them save yourselves from God's torment?

In spite of having been granted hearing, seeing, and perceiving hearts, i.e., having provided them with all the requirements of mankind in terms of bodily strength and intellectual power, they failed to enjoy Divine Bounties, felicity, and spiritual merits. They made use of them to satisfy their bestial needs, denied Divine Signs, and derided the Messenger of God. As a consequence of their vices, they suffered from the torment and paid for their mockery.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 27

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا مَا حَوْلَكُمْ مِنَ الْقُرَى وَصَرَّفْنَا الآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

***27. And verily We have destroyed towns round about you and We have shown* [*them*] *the Signs in various ways that they might return* [*from error to the Truth*].**

Annihilation and Divine Wrath follow the ultimatum given by prophets. Studying the history of peoples closer to us in terms of time may bear further results. The blessed Verse in question refers to the preceding one saying that in the same manner that the people of 'Ad were annihilated as a consequence of their opposition against their prophet, he inhabitants of the villages around you, namely within the vicinity of Mecca were also destroyed.

Consider the peoples of Hud (as) in the Yemen, Salih (as) in Hijr, and Thamud in Sodom, and Lot on your way to Sham [viz. Syria, Palestine, East Jordan, Lebanon, and the northwestern parts of the Fertile Crescent] and take a lesson. God recurrently showed His Signs and the Tokens of His Omnipotence unto them so that they may turn away from disbelief to Monotheism. Failing to do so, they were afflicted with the torment as a consequence of their vicious deeds.

The Verse refers to the fact that God repeatedly shows His Signs in the forms of miracles, threats, rewards of Paradise, Heavenly Bounties, Tokens of His Omnipotence, poverty, and hardships so that man may forego his obduracy. God gives an Ultimatum to man to not deny the Divine Message, harming prophets and the faithful. Failing to take a lesson, man will be afflicted with torment so that others may take a lesson.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 28

فَلَوْلا نَصَرَهُمُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ قُرْبَاناً آلِهَةً بَلْ ضَلُّوا عَنْهُمْ وَذَلِكَ إِفْكُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ

28. Then why did those whom they had taken for gods besides Allah, as a way of approach* [*to Allah*] *not help them? Nay, but they vanished completely from them* [*when there came the torment*]. *And that was* [*the end of*] *their deviation and what they were seeking.

Inclination toward proximity to God is innate; even idolaters regard idols as a means of nearness to God:

(***"as a way of approach"***).

We may rely on someone as a means of succor in hardships, but it would be wishful thinking to regard idols as means of support:

(***"Nay, but they vanished completely from them"***).

The Verse in question rejects the claims of those entangled in torment owing to their polytheism and disbelief.

They worshipped the statues of gods fashioned by them and said:

"we do not worship them except for rendering us nearer to God."

Upon sending down the torment they were abandoned.

At that time:

"they vanished completely from them when there came the torment."

They were unable to find their objects of worship owing to slandering the One God and associating false gods with Him. The Verse refers to the fact that had they enjoyed any rank or merit with, they should have been able to save their worshippers from torment rather than being annihilated in it.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 29

وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَراً مِنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنْصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَى قَوْمِهِمْ مُنْذِرِينَ

29. And when We sent toward you a group of the jinn, listening to the Qur'an. When they stood in the presence thereof, they said: "Listen in silence!" And when it was finished, they returned to their people, as warners.

Familiarity with the Qur'an broadens man's horizon. According to the Qur'an, man is not the only perceiving and willful being, but other beings called jinn enjoy the same conditions but excel man in power. The Verse may allude to polytheists and those in error who regard themselves as masterminds. It denotes that you listened to so many Verses but failed to believe; however, the jinn listened to a few Verses and believed in the Islamic faith and promulgated its teachings.

The Noble Prophet (S) is thus addressed herein:

"Remember when We sent toward you a group of the jinn, listening to the Qur'an."

It is said that some of the jinn were Divinely inspired to leave their dwellings and lands and make their presence there to listen to the Qur'an. It is also said that when devils noticed that the way to the sky is blocked for them and whenever they wish to ascend the sky they were warded off by meteors.

They said that a great event has occurred on the earth as a consequence of which the path to the sky has been blocked for them. They embarked upon a thorough search. Traversing on the earth they came upon idols and met with the Messenger of God (S) in Wadi Nakhla. Listening to the Qur'an they learned that the same impeded them from ascending the sky.

Narrating on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas, a number of exegets regard nafaran as denoting a number of

the jinn ranging between seven, nine, and ten. Upon hearing the Holy Qur'an they asked each other to stand silent and listen to the Verses being recited. Upon returning to their folk they warned them.

It is reported that following listening to the Qur'an, the jinn believed in the Islamic faith and inquired about a number of issues and the Prophet (S) appointed a number of the jinn to promulgate the Islamic teachings among their folk.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 30

قَالُوا يَا قَوْمَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَاباً أُنْزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى مُصَدِّقاً لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَى طَرِيقٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

30. They said: "O our people! Verily, we have heard** [**the Verses of**] **a Book sent down after Musa, confirming what preceded it: it guides to the Truth and to the Straight Path."

The prophets of mankind are the prophets of the jinn as well and a group of the jinn were appointed to promulgate prophetic teachings among their own society:

(***"They said: 'O our people! Verily, we have heard …'"***).

The jinn knew the history of prophets and the Divine Books.

Upon hearing a number of Verses the jinn comprehended the truth; however, people like Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab spent a life time with the Prophet (S); however they did not wish to perceive the truth:

(***"It guides to the truth"***).

According to the blessed Verse in question, upon returning to their people, the jinn said:

"We have heard [*the Verses*] *of a Book sent down after Musa."*

It is said that the jinn made no mention of the Christian Bible since they were either Jews or unaware of the Christian Bible or did not believe in it. Upon their return, they addressed their people saying that they had heard a Book confirming the preceding Scriptures including the prophets' truthfulness and guiding to the truth and the straight path."

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 31

يَا قَوْمَنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِرْكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

31. O our people! Respond to Allah's Caller** [**namely the Messenger of God, Muhammad** (**S**)] **and believe in him. He** [**Allah**] **will forgive you of your sins, and will save you from a painful torment.

As per the Holy Qur'an, faith, repentance, interest free loan, and fearing God lead to Divine Forgiving.

The blessed Verse enumerates the principles of Islamic dogma, i.e., Divine Oneness:

(***"believe in him"***),

Prophethood:

(***"Allah's Caller"***),

and Resurrection:

(***"He will save you from a painful torment"***).

Divinely appointed prophets call people to God rather than to themselves. Faith absolves man of a number of sins like polytheism and disbelief, but sins like transgression of the rights of people is different. The Verse holds that certain sins may be forgiven. The other point is that the jinn, like mankind, have obligations and their disobedience shall lead to being regarded as sinners and subject to Divine Recompense.

According to the blessed Verse, the jinn addressed their people to guide them to the true path saying:

"O our people! Respond to Allah's Caller [namely the Messenger of God, Muhammad (S)] and believe in him. He [Allah] will forgive you of your sins, and will save you from a painful torment."

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 32

وَمَنْ لا يُجِبْ دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ فَلَيْسَ بِمُعْجِزٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءُ أُولَئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

32. And whosoever does not respond to Allah's Caller, he cannot escape on earth, and there will be no supporter for him besides Allah [from Allah's punishment]. Those are in manifest error.

Any path besides that of God is manifest error. Disbelief entangles man such that he may neither release himself nor may anyone release him. According to the blessed Verse, whosoever does not respond to Allah's Caller, i.e., Prophet Muhammad (S), out of disobedience and turning away from God's Callers, torment shall befall him and he shall have no support to release him from the affliction, since all beings are God's friends and the enemies of His enemies.

Such astray ones tread the path of manifest error.

In the same vein, Qur'anic exegets say that following the demise of his support, Abu Talib, the Noble Prophet (S) was harassed by the Quraysh and know that his call could not affect the disbelievers from Quraysh whose hearts had been hardened in time. Consequently, the Noble Prophet (S) found himself

in jeopardy.

Even though he entertained no fear, but in order to accomplish his mission he left Mecca for Ta'if, located at the verdant foot of a hill at a distance of a three day journey from Mecca. Ta'if and Thaqif, his maternal uncles, resided there and the Prophet (S) thought that they may render him support there.

He entered into negotiation with three chiefs of Thaqif, 'Abdiyaliyl ibn 'Amr and his two sons Mas'ud and Habib and called them to his support; however they not only declined his call but also derided him and instigated some rascals against him.

The people of Thaqif were of substance and had transactions with Quraysh. Their town was the seat of Lat, one of the most respected Qurayshi idols. They even failed to send their guest away unharmed. When the Noble Prophet (S) learned that they did not accept his call, he requested them to disregard the call so as not to instigate the Qurayshis.

Au contraire, they instigated rascals to stone him such that he suffered a wound in his foot and was sent away. On his way, the Prophet (S) stayed in a garden called Nakhila for a few days.

Released from the hands of the rascals from Ta'if, his heart broke and finding himself without support from men, he turned to his Lord with tears in his eyes saying:

"O Lord! I complain to You from powerlessness, insufficient means, and humility in the eyes of people, O Most Forgiving Lord!"

When the sons of Rabi'a noticed his sadness, their sense of family ties made them to ask 'Addas, a Christian slave, to take a dish of grapes to him. Fining the dish before him, he said "In the Name of Allah" and began eating the grapes.

Shockingly 'Addas asked him:

"The inhabitants of this town never utter such words. Where are you?"

He replied:

"From Mecca. Where are you from? What is your religion?"

The slave answered:

"I am a Christian from Nineveh."

The Prophet (S) inquired:

"Are you from the village of the pious man Yunus ibn Matta (as)?"

'Addas asked:

“What do you know about Yunus?”

Muhammad (S) replied:

“Yunus (as) the prophet was my brother and I am a prophet too.”

Upon hearing him, ‘Addas fell to his knees and kissed the Prophet’s (S) hands and feet. The sons of Rabi’a saw them surprisingly from afar; however they did not convert to the Islamic faith. Upon their slave’s return they warned him against the Prophet asking him to be cautious lest he might lose his faith though his was better than the one proclaimed by Muhammad.

‘Addas informed them that he had heard something from Muhammad (S) that no one save a prophet would be apprised of it.

They said to him:

“the man is a sorcerer and a charlatan.”

When Prophet Muhammad (S) learned that the people of Ta’if would not believe in the Islamic faith, he departed for Mecca and upon arriving at Nakhla at night he established his late night prayers and recited the Qur’an when the jinn heard him and believed in the Islamic faith:

(***“And when We sent to you a group of the jinn listening to the Qur’an…”***).

The Verse in question as well as those of Chapter 72 (Surah al-Jinn) and some other Verses evidently indicate two points – one is that the jinn exist and they are different from mankind and the other is that the Seal of the Prophets (S) was Divinely appointed to proclaim his Call to the jinn and mankind alike.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 33

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَمْ يَعْيَ بِخَلْقِهِنَّ بِقَادِرٍ عَلَى أَنْ يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَى بَلَى إِنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

33. Do they not see that Allah Who created the heavens and the earth and was not wearied by their creation is Able to give life to the dead? Yes, He surely is Most Able to do all things.

Lam ya’a is from ‘ayy (“powerlessness”). In order to conceive the inevitability of Resurrection, it would suffice to notice the Infinite Divine Omnipotence.

Do disbelievers in Resurrection think that raising the dead is more difficult than creation of the heavens and the earth?

(***“Do they not see that Allah Who created the heavens and the earth … is Able to give life to the***

dead?”)

The blessed Verse rejects disbelievers’ incredulity of Resurrection and proves the raising of the dead on the Last Day.

In response to their disbelief the Verse says:

“Do they not see?”

Do disbelievers not perceive that God created the heavens and the earth without any toil? The Creator is so Omnipotent that He has created such heavens with such grandeur abounding in planets, stars, galaxies, and creatures whose number is solely known by Him. He has also created the earth together with mountains, oceans, and diverse species of creatures through His Divine Will.

The Qur’an says:

“When He decrees a matter, He only says to it: ‘Be!’ – and it is”[1].

“Be!”

in the aforementioned Verse indicates the immediate response of possibilities that through Divine Creative Command come into being ex nihilo which bears testimony to Divine Omnipotence including the raising of the dead unintelligible to disbelievers’ imperfect intellect attempting in vain to deny and/or restrict Divine Omnipotence and interpret the Verses without the scope of physical phenomena through their comprehension and taste.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 34

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى النَّارِ أَلَيْسَ هَذَا بِالْحَقِّ قَالُوا بَلَى وَرَبِّنَا قَالَ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ

34. And on the Day when those who disbelieve will be exposed to the Fire [***God will say to them***]***: “Is this*** [***Hell***] ***not the truth?” They will say: “Yes by our Lord!” He will say: “Then taste the torment, because you used to disbelieve!”***

Physical and mental torments are side by side on the Day of Resurrection. On that Day, confessing Divine Sovereignty shall be of no avail. In this Verse God Almighty informs His Noble Prophet (S) that when disbelievers are exposed to Hell fire on the Last Day, it will be said unto them that they did not believe the prophets’ warnings.

They will say:

“Aye, by God what they said unto us were totally right but we failed to believe their promises and

warnings."

The angels in charge of tormenting disbelievers in Hell will say unto them

"You declined the prophets' Calls and felt animosity toward them. Now you taste a severe torment as a recompense for your vicious deeds."

"Because you used to disbelieve!"

may refer to the fact that Hell fire blazes through wickedness, denial of Truth, and animosity toward Divinely appointed prophets and messengers.

At that time, man reproaches his own self saying:

"The prophets uttered the Truth, but you denied it."

Upon tasting the torment they admit to their ignorance, but their belief will be of no avail and they have to suffer the consequences of their disbelief.

Surah al-Ahqaf - Verse 35

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُوا الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَلا تَسْتَعْجِلْ لَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلاّ سَاعَةً مِنْ نَهَارٍ
بَلاغٌ فَهَلْ يُهْلَكُ إِلاّ الْقَوْمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

35. Therefore be patient [O Prophet!] as did the arch-prophets [lit. possessor of constancy, determination, and strong will, applied to Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad]. On the Day when they will see that [torment] with which they are promised as if they had not stayed more than an hour in a single day. [This is] a clear Message [for all]. But shall any be destroyed except the people who are evil doers?

'Azm is used in the senses of will, decision, determination, and Divine Law (shari'a) Uulu al-'azm is applied to the legislating prophets.

Taking disbelievers' chastisement into consideration paves the way for believers' patience and perseverance. Addressing His Messenger (S), God asks him to be patient with disbelievers and their false claims as to deeming you words as legends in the same manner as the arch-prophets were patient with disbelievers and their cruelty.

He also asks him to not make haste in having them chastised for their vicious deeds since mundane life is so transient that when disbelievers taste Divine Torment they think that they stayed in this world but for a single hour. Compared to the life to come, this worldly life seems to resemble a single moment. In retrospect, this mundane life may be likened to a dream. Fanciful pleasures of the flesh preoccupying

man leave him with nothing but misfortune, cruelty, and darkness of heart.

"Illa al-sa'a"

(*"except an hour"*)

may indicate the changeable moment referred to the time that is constantly in the process of generation and corruption lacking stable existence.

The world to come is the stable and unchangeable world of life, i.e., eternal life, referred to in the Holy Qur'an as:

***"Verily, the home of the Hereafter – that is the life indeed** [**i.e., the eternal life that will never end**]**, if they but knew"**2.*

In Manhaj al-Sadiqin it is narrated from Imam Muhammad Baqir and Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) that the arch-prophets were five in number who abrogated their preceding Laws. They are Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus (as), and Muhammad (S) who are also referred to as Sarat al-Nabiyin. Thus is narrated on the authorities of Ibn 'Abbas and Qatada. Other narrations have been narrated by exegets but space limitations impede their citation.

In short, ulu al-'azm in its literal sense of "having a strong will" may be applied to all the prophets since they possessed strong will, clemency, and perseverance in the fulfillment of their Divine Mission. Their words were against the beliefs and practices of their time, as a consequence of which they suffered many an affliction and were patient with disbelievers for the fulfillment of Divine Command.

The Verse in question may serve as an encouragement for the Noble Prophet (S) to be patient in the same manner as all the prophets were patient with disbelievers and their vicious deeds.

1. 2:117
2. 29:64

Surah Muhammad, Chapter 47, Verses 1 – 21

(Muhammad/The Fighting)
Section (juz'): 26
Number of Verses: 38

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The Chapter has thirty eight Verses and is revealed at Mecca. The title of the Chapter derives from the second Verse in which mention is made of the name of the Noble Prophet Muhammad (S). The dominant theme of the Chapter is jihad against the enemies of Islam hence Its designation "The Chapter of Battle" (Surah al-Qital).

The main subject matter concerns believers and disbelievers, comparing the twain in this world and the world to come, and the hypocrites' sabotage in Medina. Mention is also made of issues regarding the captivity and freedom of the prisoners of war, call to spend money in Allah's Cause, and forbidding obsequiousness and complacency in dealing with the enemy.

It is narrated that whoever wishes to perceive the circumstances of the Prophet's (S) Household (as) and their enemies is supposed to recite the Chapter in question.[1] It is also reported that the Noble Prophet (S) would recite the Chapter in his evening prayers.[2]

The Merits of Reciting the Chapter

According to a Prophetic tradition

"One who recites Sura Muhammad, God will provide him with the streams of Paradise."[3]

Surah Muhammad – Verse 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

1. Those who disbelieve and hinder** [**men**] **from the Path of Allah, He will render their deeds vain.

From among the one hundred and fourteen Chapters of the Holy Qur'an, mention is made of reproaching and threatening the enemies in eleven Chapters. The verse in question is one of such instances.

The Noble Verse reads:

"Those who disbelieve and hinder men from the Path of Allah, God will render their deeds vain."

The verse alludes to the Meccan polytheists and leaders of disbelief serving as war mongers waging wars against the Islamic faith. They were not only disbelievers but also employed diverse stratagems to hinder people from the Path of Allah.

Some exegets, e.g. Zamakhshari in his Kashshaf, considering the meaning of the following Verse which concerns faith, have interpreted sadd ad hoc in the sense of:

"turning away" (***i'radh***)

from faith; however, taking the Qur'anic usage of the word into consideration, the dominant sense of the word is "hindering and impeding."

"Render their deeds vain"

is used in the sense that "He" will make their plans ineffective and fruitless, since reducing something serves as a metaphor for being abandoned which necessitates perdition.

At any rate, some exegets take the sentence as an allusion to those who provided people with the meat of the camels slaughtered at the battle of Badr. Abu Jahl, Safwan, and Sahl ibn 'Amr each slaughtered ten camels as a token of thanksgiving.[4] Such acts were of no avail with polytheism and satanic stratagems hence their being rendered totally vain.

It is not apparently restricted to the sense in question rather all their seemingly good deeds, e.g. providing aid to the needy and hospitality, will be rendered vain owing to their faithlessness. Furthermore, God Almighty will render all their acts performed for the obliteration of Islam and defeating Muslims and also impedes them from attaining to their goals.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 2

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَآمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَفَّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَأَصْلَحَ بَالَهُمْ

2. But those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and believe in that which is sent down to Muhammad – for it is the truth from their Lord – He will absolve them of their vices and will make good their state.

Having faith is insufficient for availing oneself of Divine Favors rather one has to do good righteous deeds and follow the Messenger of God:

(*"those who believe and do righteous good deeds and believe in that which is sent down to Muhammad"*).

Regarding the Noble Verse in question exegets maintain that:

"But those who believe"

alludes to the Medinan Helpers (ansar) and "that which" (ma):

***"in that which is sent down"* (*bi-ma nuzzila*)**

refers to the Qur'an; in other words the contextual meaning of the clause in question is "those who believed in the Qur'an sent down to Muhammad (S) by God and held that It is true, unchangeable, and standing firm on Its basis to the Last Day and It is not exposed to alterations like other Divine Books, e.g. the Torah, the Christian Bible, which have been abrogated by the Holy Qur'an.

Those believing in the Qur'an and the prophethood of the Messenger of God, the Seal of the Prophets (S) and did righteous good deeds as per the Divine Decrees and Laws of the Islamic faith, God:

***"will make good their state"* (*aslaha balahum*),**

namely their state will improve out of having faith in Islam, since their conversion to the Islamic faith and having faith in it will alter their inward states and refine their heart out of moral and inward vices and corruption.

"Will make good their state"

concerns believers and contrasts with:

"Will render their deeds vain"

which falls to the share of disbelievers. In other words, in as much as believers proceed on the path of improvement of their inward and outward states through their faith, disbelievers will remain in error out of their disbelief. It may also indicate that as disbelief will render good deeds vain, faith, au contraire, will lead to purity and refinement of heart.

Surah Muhammad - Verse 3

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْبَاطِلَ وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ أَمْثَالَهُمْ

***3. That is because those who disbelieve follow falsehood, while those who believe follow the truth* [*sent down*] *by their Lord. Thus does Allah set forth for mankind their parables* [*for their awakening*].**

One of the Qur’anic didactic techniques attested in a number of Verses is to draw a distinction between the fates of believers and disbelievers. In the Verse in question, belief and disbelief are distinguished as per truth and falsehood which reveals the Qur’anic logic in Its encounter with foes.

“That”

(dhalika) in the blessed Verse is a demonstrative pronoun whose antecedent are the disbelievers and it signifies the vanity of their deeds.

Since they followed their vain desires and proceeded on the path of falsehood, their deeds reflect their inner self, even though seemingly good, their deeds would be rendered vain since their motives rested in the pleasures of the flesh rather than obtaining Divine Satisfaction and were done out of disobedience to God and following their concupiscence and Satan.

Whoever does such deeds, his deeds will be rendered vain and devoid of truth since truth is restricted to God and the followers of falsehood remain in error.

The Holy Qur’an says:

“That is because Allah – He is the Truth and what they invoke besides Him is falsehood”[5].

Thus God strikes a parable saying that good and righteous deeds depend on believing in Divine Unity and the prophethood of His Messenger. When the heart rests truly on the firm ground of faith, deeds stemming from it will be of effect and constancy since man’s truth lies in his heart which accommodates faith and serves as the reservoir of piety. In case it is corrupted through disbelief, all deeds will be rendered vain and ineffective.

Thus it becomes evident that the recompense of one’s deeds depends on the firmness or frailty of faith. The firmer one’s faith and certitude become the effects and the rewards of one’s deeds will be higher and the same will purify the heart from vices.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 4

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ حَتَّى إِذَا أَثْخَنْتُمُوهُمْ فَشُدُّوا الْوَثَاقَ فَإِمَّا مَنّاً بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَاءً حَتَّى تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ذَلِكَ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لانْتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

4. Therefore, when you meet those who disbelieve [*in battlefield*]***, smite*** [*their*] ***necks*** [*when they fall into captivity*] ***till when you have killed and wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly*** [*lest they flee*] ***either for generosity or ransom until the war lays down its burden. Thus*** [*is God’s Command*] ***But if it had been Allah’s Will*** [*to send down lightning, earthquake, and other disasters*]***, He Himself could certainly have punished them. But*** [*He let you fight*] ***in order to test***

some of you with others. But those who are killed in the Way of Allah, He will never let their deeds be lost.

Athkhantumuhum derives from th-kh-n "totally vanquish the enemy." Withaq is used in the sense of "a bond used to tie someone or something, e.g. a rope."

As mentioned above, the preceding Verses serve as a prelude to prepare Muslims for receiving a significant order concerning war.

It reads:

"Upon confrontation with disbelievers on the battlefield attack them with full force and smite their necks!"

"Smiting their heads" is evidently employed in the sense of "smiting them." It is needless to say that warriors are not supposed to embark upon doing the same but it would suffice to slay them. However, "smiting their necks" evidently indicates taking their life and that it what on which emphasis is laid.

At any rate, the Command ad hoc concerns engaging in war on the battlefield, since laqaytum derives from l-q-y which in such instances indicates "war." Other pieces of evidence are to be found in the Verse in question denoting the same idea, e.g. captivity of prisoners of war, the word harb ("war"), and martyrdom for Allah's cause.

In short, the word liqa at times denotes "meeting, encounter" and at times it indicates "confronting on the battlefield." Both senses are attested in the Qur'an and the word in the Verse in question is used in the latter sense.

Thus it becomes evident that those aspiring to spread anti-Islamic propaganda claim that according to the Islamic doctrine, Muslims may behead disbelievers upon confrontation with them; however, the claim springs from ill will and ulterior motives otherwise the Verse per se clearly demonstrates confrontation with the enemy on the battlefield.

It is needless to say that upon confrontation with the bloodthirsty enemy on the battlefield, one has to attack severely and strike fatal blows on the enemy or else he will perish. The instruction fully stands to logic.

It further says that such fatal attacks are supposed to be pursued such that the enemy falls down in which case defeated warriors are to be taken as captives and they are supposed to be bound firmly:

(***"till when you have killed and wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly*** [***lest they flee***]***"***).

The word athkhantumuhum derives from th-kh-n denotes harshness and firmness hence indicating triumph and conquest and total subjugation of the enemy.

The majority of exegets take the sentence in the sense of the immense number and severity of slaying the enemy, the issue of slaughtering the enemy rather than the original sense remains untouched.[6]

At any rate, the verse indicates a measured military command to the effect that defeated warriors are not supposed to be taken as captives prior to the enemy's total defeat since embarking upon the same may jeopardize the position of Muslims engaged in war through their preoccupation with the issue which may hinder them from their main tasks.

The expression:

"then bind a bond firmly [***lest they flee***]***"*** (***"fa-shuddu al-withaq"***)

with due consideration to the meaning of the word withaq ("rope") is a reference to making doubly sure that the captives are bound firmly lest they liberate themselves and strike fatal blows.

The next sentence indicates the instruction concerning those taken captive at war as per which following the war they may either be granted freedom non gratia or they may be ransomed or exchanged with odd numbers:

(***"either for generosity or ransom"***).

Therefore, prisoners of war may not be slain following the end of the war but the leader of Muslims exercises his discretion to either ransom or exchange them for odd numbers or set them free non gratia. It is actually a kind of compensation to be borne by the enemy. The issue is discussed in sources on Islamic law.

The Verse further adds that the status quo is supposed to be still effective in which fatal blows are to be struck upon the enemy and a number of them are supposed to be taken captive:

"until the war lays down its burden."

One may desist from inflicting further blows when the enemy is totally defeated and the flame of war is extinguished. Awzar is the plural form of wizr denoting "heavy burden" and at times connoting "sins" since the burden of the latter is borne by one who commits it.

It is interesting to note that the heavy burdens referred to in the Verse are attributed to the war:

"until the war lays down its burden."

The heavy burdens refer to diverse kinds of weaponry as well as the responsibilities shouldered by warriors. It is solely at the end of the war that they desist from shouldering them.

The Verse further adds that you are supposed to act upon the same instructions:

“but if it had been Allah’s Will, He Himself could certainly have punished them”

through lightning, earthquake, storm, and other disasters. Nonetheless, there would be no ground for trials.

“But [***He let you fight***] ***in order to test some of you with others.”***

It is actually the grounds lying behind engaging in war and the main point of the opposition between the Truth and falsehood. It is through such wars that the lines of true believers who act are separated from those who merely talk.

Faculties and abilities flourish, perseverance and resistance are invigorated, and the main goal of the mundane life which is strengthening the power of faith and other human values are attained. Had believers stepped aside preoccupied with everyday life and had God intervened miraculously to defeat the polytheists’ and oppressors’ rebellions, a worthless, stagnant, and frail society would have come into being and the Islamic faith would have been merely a name.

To sum up, one could say that to establish His Religion, God is needless of our struggles. The point is that we need the sacred war on the battlefield to improve our abilities.

The same idea is variously expressed in the Qur’an, for instance,

“Do you think that you will enter Paradise before Allah tests those of you who fought in His Cause and also tests those who are the patient?”[7]***.***

The preceding Verse reads:

“And that Allah may [***through such battles***] ***purify the believers from sins and destroy the disbelievers.”***

The last sentence of the Verse in question treats of the martyrs fell in such battles whom the Muslim community owes a great deal;

“But those who are killed in the Way of Allah, He will never let their deeds be lost.”

Their troubles and pains will not be in vain but they will be all kept in Divine Records.

Their sacrifices will be evident in this world since hearing:

“There is no god but Allah”

reminds Muslims that thanks to their sacrifices the chains of bondage are broken and Muslims owe their good name to them.

Surah Muhammad - Verses 5-6

سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ

وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ

5. He will guide them and set right their state.
6. And will soon admit them to [***high stations in***] ***Paradise which He has made known to them.***

Divine Guidance is permanent even after death and martyrdom. Martyrdom for God's Cause leads to all sins and faults to be forgiven and states to be set aright. The Verses in question add three further bounties.

Firstly,

"He will guide them"

which indicates Guidance toward high stations, great deliverance, and Paradise as Divine Reward.

Secondly,

"He will set right their state,"

i.e., He bestows peace of mind and spirituality upon them, sets them in harmony with Divine angels, and invites them to His Feast through His Mercy.

The last bounty is that He

"will soon admit them to [***high stations in***] ***Paradise which He has made known to them."***

Some exegets maintain that God not only expresses the qualities of the Garden of Paradise but also specifies the attributes and signs of their palaces in Paradise such that upon being admitted to Paradise, they immediately depart for their palaces.[8]

Some exegets take 'arafaha from 'arf ("fragrance, perfume") saying that God admits to Paradise throughout which the guests may enjoy the sweet smell.

Some also hold that taking into consideration the Verse:

"Think not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision"[9]***,***

it becomes evident that:

"set right their state"

is on a par with everlasting life through which martyrs are prepared to stand in the presence of Allah with the veils and coverings removed.[10]

It would be appropriate to make mention of a number of traditions concerning martyrs.

According to a Prophetic tradition:

"There is a better deed above another ending in martyrdom in the Way of Allah, above which no better deed is imaginable."[11]

According to a tradition narrated on the authority of Imam Baqir(as):

"There is no single drop dearer to God except for the drop of the blood shed in His Way or the drop of tears shed at night for His awe. There is no step dearer to God but the one taken for helping blood relatives or the one taken to participate in the holy war for God's Cause."[12]

The discussion may be concluded with a tradition narrated on the authority of Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha (as).

Quoting his forefathers from the Messenger of God (S) he says:

"The first one to enter Paradise is the martyr."

Surah Muhammad – Verse 7

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ

7. O you who believe! If you help Allah, He will help you, and make your foothold firm.

Whoever bears aid to the Islamic faith through his thought, speech, and deeds, God will also bear him assistance.

Man is a very limited creature and the assistance borne to the Religion of God is very restricted, but God is infinite and His Help springs from His Infinite Power. Addressing believers, the noble Verse says that if they help Allah, He will help them, and their foothold will be firm in the way of Truth. Helping God is on a par with helping His Religion and Messenger (S).

Whoever helps God's Religion, i.e., the Islamic faith revealed to Prophet Muhammad (S) by any means possible to him through his life, property, pen, with attempts at helping to establish Islam, hinder

corruption in religion, and bear assistance to believers through any possible means has helped God and strengthened His Religion and in return, God will strengthen his will to carry out his mundane and otherworldly tasks conveniently.

"And make your foothold firm"

demonstrates that He will make the helpers of God's Religion to persevere such that they may not deviate from the True Path by satanic temptations.

It is narrated from Qatada that

"It is incumbent upon God to bear aid to one helping His Religion since He says:

'If you help Him, He will help you.'

It is also incumbent upon Him to increase His bounties to those who thank Him since He says:

***'If you be grateful, I will increase** [**your bounties**].'*

He will remember him who remembers Him since He says:

"If you remember Me, I will remember you."

It is also incumbent upon God to keep His Promise to those who keep their promise since He says:

'Keep My Promise and I will keep yours.'"

Surah Muhammad - Verses 8-9

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَتَعْساً لَهُمْ وَأَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

8. But those who disbelieve, for them is destruction, and** [**Allah**] **will make their deeds vain.
9. That** [**destruction**] **is because they dislike thatwhich Allah has sent down; so He has made theirdeeds fruitless.

The word ta's indicates "slip, stumble, fall into the river." Comparison is one of the best methods of education.

Concerning martyred believers a preceding Verse reads:

“He will never let their deeds be lost.”

Regarding disbelievers the Verse in question reads:

“[He] will make their deeds vain.”

The contrast is a good tiding to the believers struggling in Allah’s Cause.

Addressing believers, the Qur’an says:

“[He will] make your foothold firm.”

Concerning disbelievers, the penultimate Verse says:

“For them is destruction,”

which originally denotes that they will stumble over the precipice.

According to the last two Verses, those who disbelieved were humiliated and destroyed. God made them stumble on the battlefield thus rendering their attempts vain. They disliked the Qur’an revealed to His Prophet (S) as a consequence of which they were defeated and humiliated and their deeds were rendered fruitless.

According to Manhaj, it is narrated from Imam Muhammad Baqir (as) that the Verse in question indicates that disbelievers disliked ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib’s merits, as a consequence of which they deviated from the Right Path and their deeds were rendered vain, since doing righteous good deeds are based on belief in Divine Unity, sincerity in worshipping God, belief in Divine Guidance, and loving the Prophet (S) and his pure offspring (as).

It is worthy of note that:

“What God sent down”

is employed to denote different things one of which is the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib’s (as) Imamate.[13]

Surah Muhammad – Verse 10

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ دَمَّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ أَمْثَالُهَا

10. Have they not traveled through the earth and seen what was the end of those before them? Allah destroyed them completely, and a similar [fate is in store for] disbelievers.

Dammara derives from the root d-m-r denotes “destroy, annihilate, demolish.” Collocated with the preposition ‘ala, it indicates emphasis.

Addressing the negligent astray in ignorance, the blessed Verse asks:

“Why do they not travel on the earth to see the traces of the peoples of the past and see that they were destroyed by Us owing to their denial of the prophet and harassing them. They should know that their destruction was due to their disbelief and disobedience. We destroyed the peoples of the past and such fate awaits these disbelievers.”

Surah Muhammad – Verse 11

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَأَنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ لا مَوْلَى لَهُمْ

11. That is because Allah is the Protector of those who believe, and the disbelievers have no protector.

The disbelievers who did not apparently enjoy any support in this world relied solely on God and He will be their Protector on the Last Day. Having faith leads to being granted Divine support and disbelief and finally it leads to losing it. The polytheists’ and disbelievers’ support will be ineffective on the Last Day.

The antecedent of the demonstrative pronoun

“that”

(dhalika) in the blessed Verse in question is the preceding Verse. The believers’ dignity, honor, and triumph is due to the fact that they helped God’s Religion, as a consequence of which they enjoyed Divine Protection.

The token of God’s Friendship toward His servant is that the latter is obedient to his conscience. His heart is the home of love and friendship toward God and it is through his faith, piety, and helping God’s Religion that such great bounty has fallen to his share.

“And the disbelievers have no protector”

since it is through their disbelief that disbelievers have failed to receive Divine bounties as a result of which they have not protector. Thus, all creatures turn into his obedient host. They all become his helpers and friends and at Divine Command render him aid whenever necessary and set right his state.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 12

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ وَالنَّارُ مَثْوىً لَهُمْ

12. Certainly Allah will admit those who believe and do righteous good deeds to Gardens** [**of Paradise**] **under which** [**i.e., trees**] **rivers flow while those who disbelieve enjoy themselves** [**in worldly life**] **and eat as cattle eat and** [**finally**] **the Fire will be their abode.

Admitting believers to Paradise is a token of Divine Guardianship. Believers doing righteous good deeds are under Divine Protection and He makes them enter Paradise. Deriving pleasures in life is permitted within the limits of Divine Laws. What lie beyond such limits are beastly pleasures.

In this blessed Verse, God Almighty promises believers and those who have done righteous good deeds that Gardens of Paradise will fall into their share beneath whose trees the rivers of Divine Mercy are incessantly flowing. The people of Paradise shall abide in them forever. The bounties of Paradise will be granted through his Grace and Beneficence. His Mercy will be permanent since He is of Permanent Bounties and He is of Abundant Beneficence.

He warns disbelievers that believers will abide in the bountiful Paradise whereas those who disbelieve in Divine Unity and the Last Day but are solely preoccupied with pleasures of the flesh and eat as cattle eat and the abode of such people will be Hellfire.

It is said elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an that the recompense of deeds should be consistent with the deeds committed (jaza'an wifaqan). Believers help the Religion of God and His Messenger (S) as a consequence of which God helps and befriends them and they will enjoy His Grace and Mercy in this world and the world to come; whereas disbelievers turned away from Truth and followed their mundane and false desires.

They were preoccupied themselves with the mundane pleasures and did not take one single step toward Truth and spirituality hence their abode is the Fire.

"Allah is not unjust to His servants"[14].

Surah Muhammad – Verse 13

وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ هِيَ أَشَدُّ قُوَّةً مِنْ قَرْيَتِكَ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَتْكَ أَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ فَلَا نَاصِرَ لَهُمْ

12. And many a** [**people of a**] **town, stronger than** [**the people of**] **your town which has driven you

out We have destroyed. And there was no helper for them.

The Prophet of Islam's (S) migration was based on his own will, but Meccan disbelievers drove him into dire circumstances which led him to emigrate from Mecca.

That is why God says that the people of Mecca were responsible for his emigration:

(***"has driven you out"***).

In this blessed Verse God warns disbelievers that many an inhabitant of towns were stronger than Meccans in terms of power but Meccan and Qurayshi disbelievers drove the Prophet (S) out of his hometown. God rendered them hopeless such as the ancient peoples like 'Ad and Thamud who were strong and powerful and their physical prowess failed to save them from torment since, as mentioned in the above Verse, God is the Friend and Protector of believers.

He will not help disbelievers against torments and afflictions.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 14

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَمَنْ زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ

14. Is he who is on a clear proof from his Lord, like those for whom their evil deeds that they do are beautified for them while they follow their own lusts?

The prophethood of the Prophet of Islam (S) is accompanied with clear proofs. He is Divinely appointed to proclaim the Divine Message. He has nothing of his own to profess and he lays emphasis on the same. Certainly believers rely on proofs whereas disbelievers rely on their vain desires.

The noble Verse draws a distinction between the people of Truth and those of falsehood. He produces clear proofs as to his Divine prophethood. The Holy Qur'an is both the Noble Messenger's (S) miracle and the Book of Law. It is a clear proof demonstrating his Truth since Divine Word is inimitable in terms of eloquence and inclusion of secrets such that Arab eloquent orators and scholars worldwide failed to produce one single verse like It.

Is such individual on a par with one devoid of spiritual perfection? Are not their vices beautified for them through satanic embellishment? Are they not followers of their concupiscence? The wise know that these two individuals are not alike.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 15

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِنْ مَاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ لَبَنٍ لَمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ خَمْرٍ لَذَّةٍ

لِلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ عَسَلٍ مُصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيماً فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ

15. The description of Paradise which the pious have been promised** [is that] **in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed, rivers of milk of which the taste never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of clarified honey therein for them is every kind of fruit and forgiveness from their Lord.** [Are these] **like those who shall dwell forever in the Fire and be given to drink boiling water so that it cuts up their bowels.

Those who keep away from the transient pleasures of the flesh through piety will attain to permanent felicity;

(***"the pious have been promised"***).

Imam Husayn (as) says

"Divine Forgiveness falling to the share of the people of Paradise is the best bounty for them."

Then the Noble Imam refers to the Qur'anic verse:

"But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allah. That is the supreme success"[15].

The Verse depicts the Paradise awaiting the pious saying that there are four rivers in Paradise for the pious.

Firstly,

"rivers of water"

in which pure and permanent water flows unlike that of the world whose taste and color will not change through stagnation but its purity and taste will be the same. It is this world which is subject to permanent alteration whose elements are at all times in the process of generation and corruption.

The elements of the world to come will not be subject to change since as per the Holy Qur'an

"Verily, the home of the Hereafter – that is the life indeed"[16].

Secondly,

"rivers of milk"

in Paradise,

"whose taste never changes"

resemble water in terms of purity. The milk is not like that of this world that goes sour shortly and becomes useless. The milk, like the water, is incessantly flowing since the milk and water in Paradise spring from the purity of the hearts of the pious.

Thirdly,

"rivers of wine,"

represent all kinds of intoxicant drinks. Unlike the wine in this world, that of Paradise is tasty, delicious, joyful, and invigorating.

Fourthly,

"rivers of clarified honey"

are prepared for the pious in Paradise.

The word:

"clarified"

indicates that heavenly honey is pure and devoid of impurities. It is unlike the honey in this world mingled with wax and other things which is to be purified.

"Therein for them is every kind of fruit and forgiveness from their Lord."

Heavenly bounties for the pious are not restricted to these four rivers but all kinds of fruit and any imaginable or unimaginable bounty will be prepared for them.

Those aspiring to find such bounties are supposed to know that Divine Favors and heavenly bounties are reserved for the pious in the Hereafter:

(***"the pious have been promised"***).

It is noteworthy that the seeds of such bounties are to be sown in our hearts in this world so that they bear fruit. In other words, one has to struggle in order to attain to the disposition of piety. The disposition of piety is to be acquired in this world such that it bears fruit in the Hereafter in the form of three rivers. God strikes parables in the Holy Qur'an to express many a meaning and secret of creation without which man may not perceive them through his intellect.

Qur'anic Verses are the mines of secrets and abundant delicacies contained in Their words whose esoteric meaning is solely perceptible to:

"those deeply rooted in knowledge,"

namely the Infallible Imams (as).

According to a recurrently transmitted Prophetic tradition, through performing deeds and prayers of supererogation (nawafil) man attains to a state in which his vision, hearing, and touch turn into those of Truth. The self of such man is annihilated and he is absorbed in God such that he finds everlasting life in Him.

Are such pious believers immersed in the rivers of Mercy and those enjoying His Infinite Bliss are on a par with those whose abode will be Hellfire for good as they are disfavored?

"[Are these] like those who shall dwell forever in the Fire and shall have to drink boiling water so that it shall cut up their bowels."

Any wise person knows that the pious believer is not on a par with the polytheist and/or the dissimulating disbeliever. The former will immerse in the rivers of Divine Mercy enjoying Divine Infinite Bounties for good and the latter will be disfavored and afflicted with different kinds of torment. How may they stand on a par?

Surah Muhammad – Verse 16

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ حَتَّى إِذَا خَرَجُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مَاذَا قَالَ آنِفاً أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ

16. And among them are some who [apparently] listen to you till when they go out from you, they say to those who have received knowledge: "What has he said just now? Such are men whose hearts Allah has sealed and they follow their vain desires.

Addressing the Prophet (S) the Verse says that the disbelievers who are nominal Muslims attend your sessions and listen to the Qur'an, but they neither believe in your prophethood nor in the Book revealed to you. They are neither able to recognize it as the Divine Book nor do they understand it.

Upon meeting your followers who know your words they say contemptuously and mockingly: "about what the man is talking?" O Prophet (S)! Your words are not beyond human understanding, but it is through their grudge and animosity that God seals their hearts so that they are unable to perceive the truth and they follow their vain desires.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 17

وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدى وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ

17. While as for those who accept Guidance, He increases their guidance and bestows on them their piety.

Accepting Divine Guidance by man leads to Its increase by God. Piety is the Divine Reward bestowed upon those who accept the Guidance;

(*“*[***He***] ***bestows on them their piety”***).

The Verse refers to the guided whose guidance is increased upon listening to the Revelation through which the truth of piety and the light of knowledge illuminate their hearts leading them from the shadows of ignorance to the light of knowledge.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 18

فَهَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلاّ السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَقَدْ جَاءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا فَأَنَّى لَهُمْ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ ذِكْرَاهُمْ

18. Do they [***disbelievers in order to believe***] ***then await*** [***anything***] ***other than the Hour that it should come upon them suddenly? But some of its portents have already come and when it is on them*** [***on the Day of Resurrection***] ***how can they benefit then by their reminder?***

Ashrat is the plural form of sharat (“portent, sign, indication”).

As per a Prophetic tradition,

“but some of its portents have already come”

refers to his prophethood,17 since the last Messenger has Divinely appointed, the last Divine Book has been revealed, and men have been provided with the last decisive Argument. Thus any sin, corruption, disbelief, and denial will make the Last Day occur earlier.

The world al-Sa’a;

(***“the Hour”***)

is usually employed in the sense of Resurrection, but it may also indicate Divine Wrath and annihilation of men in this world which will be a prelude to the torments of Resurrection.

Ibn ‘Abbas narrates that at the farewell pilgrimage (hajjat al-wida’) on which Salman the Persian was the most intimate Companion of the Noble Prophet (S), Prophet Muhammad (S) said:

*“Should I inform you of the portents of Resurrection? They are negligence in establishing daily prayers, following vain desires, cherishing the wealthy, exchanging religion for worldly possessions.”*18

Some traditions refer to more than one hundred portents for the coming of Resurrection.

The Verse in question warns disbelievers and polytheists that an ounce of precaution is better than a pound of cure saying that those who await the advent of resurrection should know that it will come all of a sudden.

"The portents have already come"

since the Seal of the Prophets (S) has been Divinely appointed in the last days (akhir al-zaman). According to a Prophetic tradition recorded in Manhaj, the Noble Prophet (S) pointed at two fingers of his saying that the Resurrection and I are attached like these two fingers. Some other portents have already come and others are to come in time.

"When it is on them** [**on the Day of Resurrection**] **how can they benefit then by their reminder?"

Surah Muhammad - Verse 19

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لا إِلَهَ إِلاّ اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ

19. Therefore, know that there is no god but Allah and ask forgiveness for your sin, and also for [***the sin of***] ***believing men and believing women. And Allah knows well your moving about and your place of rest.***

The clause;

"ask forgiveness for your sin"

is also attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[19].

With due consideration to the fact that all prophets are infallible, there are grounds for such asking for forgiveness:

Asking for forgiveness is a kind of worshipping God even if no sin has been committed.

It may ad hoc indicate avoidance from doing what is preferable (tark al-ula). In other words, the Prophet (S) was supposed to do preferable acts but he abstained from doing them.

Asking for forgiveness may turn into a common practice for people.

It leads to attaining supreme stations by the Prophet (S).

It may connote asking for forgiveness for the sins committed by people in respect of the Prophet (S).

Asking for forgiveness is not at all times for one's sins and faults, but perceiving that he is so inferior against Divine Glory and Greatness, man asks for forgiveness.

Addressing His Prophet (S) God Almighty says unto him:

"know that there is no god but Allah and ask forgiveness for your sin and also for** [**the sin of**] **believing men and believing women."

Imami scholars are unanimous in maintaining that prophets, particularly the Seal of the Prophets (S), are infallible.

"Your sin"

(dhanbika) may either indicate abstaining from doing preferable acts or preoccupation with mundane affairs. It is narrated from the Prophet (S) that he asked forgiveness of God seventy times a day. It was for his preoccupation with carrying out the tasks of promulgation of the Islamic faith and attending to the affairs of his prophethood.

It is in the Qur'an that he is a man like other men;

(*"Verily, I am a human being like you"*).

Owing to the restrictions of human nature, preoccupation with any matter may at times hinder one from attending fully to God.

It is to be noted that his preoccupation with attending to the affairs of his prophethood was out of is obedience to God and acting upon His Command but:

"the good deeds of those disfavored by God are like the faults of favorites of God."

That is why he is asked to ask for forgiveness for himself and believers. In other words, he is asked to turn away from people following the communication of the Message and attend fully to the glorification of God. It is a source of hope to believers that the Noble Prophet (S) is asked to pray for their forgiveness.

His prayer will not remain unanswered unless we really have faith in God and His Messenger. It is worthy of note that the Prophet (S) with his supreme station is required to ask for forgiveness let alone us since we commit sins and neglect our duties at all times.

Asking for forgiveness of "the All-Forgiving of sins" and turning away from opposition to God lead to turning toward God and are regarded per se as an act of worship.

The Verse ends in:

"Allah knows well your moving about and your place of rest."

In other words, God is fully aware of the acts committed by man as well as his abode in the Hereafter. Past, present, and future make no difference to His Omniscience.

Narrating on the authority of Hudhayfa Yamani, Tabarsi records that the former said unto the Prophet (S) that he had a sharp tongue and as a consequence was afraid of ending up in Hell for that sake. The Noble Prophet (S) asked him why he was not asking for forgiveness as he [the Prophet (S)] was asking for the same one hundred times a day.

According to a Prophetic tradition, uttering:

"I ask forgiveness of God"

and

"There is no god but Allah"

are the best devotions since God Almighty says in a Qur'anic Verse:

"Therefore know that there is no god but Allah and ask forgiveness for your sin, and also for** [**the sin of**] **believing men and believing women."[20]

It is to be noted that asking for forgiveness of God may not be solely done verbally but true repentance lies in being regretful from committing sins and intending to not turn to sins and mere praying for forgiveness is of no avail.

According to a Prophetic tradition recurrently narrated:

"Regret [*from committing sins*] *is asking for forgiveness,"*

in other words, regret from committing sins forms the basis of asking for forgiveness of God. However, such regret necessitates intending to abstain from committing further sins. It may be said that true asking for forgiveness lies in repentance and intention as to committing no further sins; nonetheless, praying for forgiveness and other requirements attested in traditions and narrations are the conditions of perfect repentance.

The repentant ask for forgiveness of the All-Forgiving of sins by heart and tongue.

Surah Muhammad - Verse 20

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَوْلا نُزِّلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَإِذَا أُنْزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ مُحْكَمَةٌ وَذُكِرَ فِيهَا الْقِتَالُ رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ
يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ نَظَرَ الْمَغْشِيِّ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ فَأَوْلَى لَهُمْ

20. Those who believe say: "Why is not a Chapter** [**of the Qur'an**] **sent down** [**regarding jihad**]**?

But when a decisive Chapter is sent down and jihad is mentioned therein, you will see those in whose hearts is a disease looking at you with a look of one fainting to death. But it [***death***] ***was better for them.***

A number of believers await the declaration of jihad and make mention of their preparedness to engage in it;

(***"Those who believe say …"***).

Such declaration should be based on Divine Revelation and Command. The Verse concerns the believers whose hearts are not touched by faith and await Revelation inquiring why a Chapter has not been sent down so that we may act upon it. Nonetheless, upon the Revelation of a Chapter regarding jihad they become anxious as if they suffer from heart disease.

They look at the Prophet (S) as if they are on death bed. But the best thing leading to their felicity is to obey God's Command and that of His Messenger as well as uttering good words to the effect that they have heard the Command and they Obey It;

(***"We hear and obey"***).

Now that they disobey the Command, death is better for them.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 21

طَاعَةٌ وَقَوْلٌ مَعْرُوفٌ فَإِذَا عَزَمَ الْأَمْرُ فَلَوْ صَدَقُوا اللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْراً لَهُمْ

21. Obedience and carefully considered words [***were better for them***]***. And when the matter*** [***jihad***] ***is resolved on, then if they had been true to Allah*** [***and engage in jihad wholeheartedly***] ***it would have been*** [***certainly***] ***better for them.***

Believers are wholeheartedly obedient before the Divine declaration of jihad

(***"obedience"***).

Words and deeds are to be both accurate and well considered;

(***"obedience and carefully considered words*** [***were better for them***]***"***).

People with frail faith are afraid of engaging in jihad. They not only disobey the Command but they also attempt at justifications and irrelevant words.

Their pretexts are mentioned in different instances in the Holy Qur'an, e.g. inability to engage in jihad,

“insecurity of their families, insecurity of their houses,”

“hot weather,”

being tempted to commit sin in case of engagement in jihad, looking at Roman maids will tempt us into getting involved in sedition (at the battle of Tabuk). The Holy Qur’an says that their deserting is the sedition.

Other pretexts to refrain from engagement in jihad include: inappropriate time designated for battle, preferably postponed

“for the fear of evading incurring loss and suffering from disaster.”

The verse in question says that it would be better to obey the Command and say good words rather than uttering such pretexts. In other words, it says that it would be better for them if they speak and act wholeheartedly when the declaration of jihad is decisive, since they will lead to their pride and honor in this world and great reward, felicity, and salvation in the hereafter.

The clause:

“the matter is resolved on”

basically indicates decisiveness but taking the preceding and the following Verses into consideration it connotes “jihad.”

1. Majma’ al-Bayan [Exegesis].
2. Maraghi’s Exegesis.
3. Majma’ al-Bayan, vol. 9, Sura Muhammad.
4. Ruh al-Ma’ni, vol. 26, p. 33.
5. 22:62
6. Ibn al-A’rabi is quoted in Lisan al-’Arab as saying “Athkhana idha ghalaba wa qahara” (“The word athkhana is employed upon conquering and subjugation”).
7. 3:142
8. Majma’ al-Bayan, vol. 9, p. 98.
9. 3:169
10. al-Mizan, vol. 18, p. 244.
11. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 100, p.15.
12. Ibid, p. 14.
13. Majma’ al-Bayan, under the blessed Verse in question.
14. 8:51
15. 9:72
16. 29:64
17. Majma’ al-Bayan.
18. Nur al-Thiqalayn [Exegesis].
19. 40:55
20. Manhaj al-Sadiqin.

Surah Muhammad, Verses 22 - 38

Surah Muhammad - Verse 22

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ

22. Then if you [***who are sick at heart and frail of faith***] ***turn away from*** [***jihad***]***, you are solely expected to do mischief in the land and sever your ties of kinship.***

Turning away from religion and Qur'anic injunctions prepares the ground for corruption and mischief.

Severing the ties of kinship is a sin which is on a par with doing corruption in the land;

(***"to do mischief in the land and sever your ties of kinship"***).

The blessed Verse addresses those who are frail of faith and turn away from engagement in jihad to save their lives and says unto such people that they should not imagine that they may save themselves through abstaining from engagement in jihad since through deserting they merely pave the way for further corruption and slaughter whose consequence will affect you.

You look for the opportunity to do mischief in the land and sever the ties of kinship as you did all wrongs to gain further property in the pre-Islamic times of ignorance (jahiliyya).1

Surah Muhammad - Verse 23

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعْمَى أَبْصَارَهُمْ

23. Such are they whom Allah has cursed so that He has made them deaf and blinded their sight [***to hinder them from perceiving the truth***].

Those who desert jihad, do corruption, and sever ties of kinship are cursed by Allah. Deprivation of Divine Mercy is the consequence of our own acts.

The blessed Verse says that such people, i.e., hypocrites, who do corruption in the land and sever the ties of kinship incur Divine damnation, as a consequence of which God has made them deaf and blinded their sight so that they do not perceive the apparent and concealed signs

("[***They are***] ***deaf, dumb, and blind. So they do not understand"***)2.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 24

أَفَلا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا

24. Do they not then think deeply about the Qur'an or are their hearts locked up?

The Holy Qur'an is not solely for recitation but is the Book of thought and meditation.

Recitation is supposed to be the prelude of thought and meditation;

(***"Do they not then think deeply about the Qur'an?"***).

Everyone is supposed to think about the Qur'an and thinking is not limited to a specific group of people. The Verse raises an objection regarding those who do not think about the Qur'an to benefit from its secrets.

"Are their hearts locked up"

so that they learn nothing of the warnings and promises mentioned in the Qur'an? Their unfortunate state lies either in their carelessness toward the Perfect Divine Guidance or in their lack of perception owing to the insensitivity of their hearts and following their vain desires and their vicious acts committed earlier. One who loses his way in darkness is either blind or does not carry a light. Such hypocrites who are sick at heart failed to think about the Qur'an.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 25

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ارْتَدُّوا عَلَى أَدْبَارِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَى الشَّيْطَانُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ وَأَمْلَى لَهُمْ

25. Verily, those who have turned back as disbelievers after the guidance has been manifested to them – Satan has beautified for them [***their vicious acts***] ***and has deceived them with long awaited*** [***vain***] ***desires.***

Being tempted by Satan is a blight of faith which leads to apostasy and misfortune;

(***"Verily, those who have turned back as disbelievers"***).

Satan works through beautification of vicious acts.

Whoever beautifies vicious acts is satanic;

(***"Satan has beautified for them*** [***their vicious acts***]***"***).

The Verse depicts those who being aware of the decisive argument believed in the Islamic faith but through satanic beautification of their vices turned away from the true religion. Such people have been deceived by worldly possessions and pleasures of the flesh. They underestimated turning away from their religion.

It is also said that they are the hypocrites who following their turning to the truth of the Islamic faith and uttering the formula of Divine Unity and the prophethood of the Messenger of God were deceived by satanic beautification of their vices and vain desires and turned away from the true religion. One who believes in the Islamic faith through discernment and spiritual perception will never turn away from it.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 26

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ سَنُطِيعُكُمْ فِي بَعْضِ الْأَمْرِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِسْرَارَهُمْ

26. This is because they [***apostates who are sick at heart***] ***said to those who dislike what Allah has sent down: "We will obey you partially of the matter." But Allah knows their secrets.***

Hypocrites promise aid and support and even obedience to those who are displeased with Divine Decrees.

They collaborate with disbelievers and enemies of the Islamic faith;

(***"We will obey you partially of the matter"***).

Thus the blessed Verse explains the reasons behind such beautification and embellishment.

They said unto those who disliked the Divine Revelation sent down to the Prophet of Islam (S);

"We will obey you in part of the matter."

Hypocrites look for desperate opponents and if they do not share common denominators with them in all respects, they collaborate with them or obey them to the extent of the common denominators. Medinan hypocrites turned to Jews.

Jews from Banu Nadhir and Banu Quraydha were among the promulgators of the Islamic faith prior to the Prophet's (S) prophethood but following his Divine appointment to prophethood and owing to jealousy, arrogance, and as their interests were in jeopardy, they became displeased with the advent of Islam and promised to render aid to hypocrites because of their common denominators as to disagreement with and hatching plots against him.

"Partially for the matter"

indicates that the Jews agreed to collaborate with hypocrites but they believed in resurrection and disagreed with their idolatry.

The Verse ends in a concise warning;

"Allah knows their secrets."

He is aware of their disbelief, hypocrisy, and their conspiring with the Jews and will chastise them in the proper season. God also knows about the jealousy and enmity concealed in the hearts. They had read their scriptures and had been apprised of the signs of the Prophet of Islam (S) such that they were able to recognize him like their own child.

However, following the proclamation of his prophethood, they failed to make mention of such signs. God is aware of their secrecy.

According to a tradition narrated from Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq (as),

"those who dislike what Allah has sent down"

refers to the Umayyads who were displeased with the Revelation of the Divine Decree concerning the Imamate of 'Ali (as).3

Surah Muhammad – Verses 27-28

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا تَوَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمُ اتَّبَعُوا مَا أَسْخَطَ اللَّهَ وَكَرِهُوا رِضْوَانَهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

27. Then how will it be when the angels will take their souls at death, smiting their faces and their backs?
28. That is because they followed that which angered Allah and disliked that which pleased Him. So He made their deeds fruitless.

The word tawfi indicates "taking back in full what has been given to someone." The word is employed in the Qur'an in the sense of "death" since death is actually taking back the soul from the body. Death is not on a par with annihilation but it denotes taking back the soul in full by the angels.

Attending to the transience of the world, the end of conspiracies, and tasting the torment may hinder man from hatching plots. The blessed Verse warns those who are deceived by satanic beautification of their vices and make Muslims turn away from the Path of Truth through empty promises. All creatures are the Divine Host. Angels responsible for taking the souls also constitute the Divine Host.

They are the enemies of God's enemies and the friends of God's friends. Wielding their blazing whips they strike blows on the enemies of God since they followed falsehood and turned away from Truth. They followed the objects of Divine Wrath and disliked to obtain His Satisfaction. Their good deeds, if any, will be rendered vain and they will be the objects of Divine Wrath.4

Surah Muhammad – Verses 29-30

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ أَنْ لَنْ يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ أَضْغَانَهُمْ

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَاكَهُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَعْمَالَكُمْ

29. Or do those in whose hearts is a disease [***of hypocrisy***] ***think that Allah will not bring to light all their hidden ill-wills*** [***and jealousy***]***?***
30. Had We willed, We could have shown them to you and you should have known them by their marks but surely you will know them by the tone of their speech! And Allah knows [***all***] ***your*** [***apparent and secret***] ***deeds.***

Sinners' disgrace is not merely for the Resurrection Day but they may be ashamed in this world too. Hypocrites may be known through their tone of speech. When the Messenger of God (S) appointed 'Ali (as) as his successor at Ghadir Khum, some people said that Muhammad (S) did so out of nepotism. It was the occasion for sending down these Verses.5

These Verses make mention of the marks and qualities of hypocrites and emphasize that they may not conceal their real intentions from the Prophet (S) and believers and thereby save themselves from being disgraced.

Verse 29 reads:

"Or do those in whose hearts is the disease [***of hypocrisy***] ***think that Allah will not bring to light all their hidden ill-wills*** [***and jealousy***]***?"***

The word adhghan is the plural form of dhighn denoting "rancor, (secret) hatred." Hypocrites entertained severe hatred against the Prophet (S) and believers and were at all times looking for the opportunity to strike a blow on them. The Holy Qur'an warns them that they may not conceal their real intentions from the Prophet (S) and believers.

Verse 30 further adds:

"Had We willed, We could have shown them to you and you should have known them by their marks,"

in other words God marks their faces by which their hypocrisy could be evident to everyone.

Thus the Verse proceeds:

“but surely you will know them by the tone of their speech! And Allah knows [***all***] ***your*** [***apparent and secret***] ***deeds.”***

In his Mufradat Raghib says that lahn indicates deviation from linguistic norms such as incorrect conjugation and inflection or employment of metaphorical expressions in lieu of using words in their literal sense. The latter is intended by the Verse, namely such hypocrites who are sick at heart may be exposed through their use of hypocritical and mischievous metaphorical expressions.

Hypocrites make attempts at weakening the will power of the people so as they refrain from engagement in jihad. They try to make people veer off the course of truth and justice. They try to somehow assassinate the character of the pious and the pioneers of the Islamic faith.

According to a recurrently transmitted narration narrated by Abu Sa’id Khudri:

“We knew hypocrites at the time of the Messenger of God (*S*) *through their hostile tone of speech concerning ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib* (*as*)*.”*6

Thus an evident mark of the hypocrites was their animosity against the first believer from among men and the forerunner in supporting the cause of the Islamic faith.

As a general rule, one may not entertain anything in his heart and conceal it for long such that he may not be exposed by his tone of speech and metaphorical expressions.

Thus a narration by the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali (as), says:

“One may not conceal anything without being exposed by his slips of tongue uncovering [*his true intention reflected in*] *his face”*7.

Hypocrites’ mischievous tone of speech and their suspicious gestures and postures are to be found elsewhere in the Holy Qur’an. It is on the same grounds that a number of exegets maintain that it was following the Revelation of the Verse in question that the Prophet (S) was able to fully recognize hypocrites through their characteristics.

Thus the Noble Prophet received the Injunction to neither establish the funeral prayer for hypocrites nor ask for their forgiveness of God at their grave:

(***“And never prayer*** [***funeral prayer***] ***for any of them*** [***hypocrites***] ***who dies, nor stand at his grave”***8).

The Verse ends in;

“And Allah knows [all] your [apparent and secret] deeds.”

God Almighty is fully aware of all their innermost intentions and their outward deeds.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 31

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّى نَعْلَمَ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَنَبْلُوَ أَخْبَارَكُمْ

31. And surely We will try you till We test those who strive hard [for Allah’s Cause] and the patient and We shall test your facts [and deeds].

The word Ibtila’ may indicate trying people to discover the truth and may also denote making diverse preparations for giving vent to innermost feelings such as those mentioned in the Verse.[9] Na’lama (“we let know”) is from ‘alam (“mark”) rather than ‘ilm (knowledge), the antonym of jahl (“ignorance”) connoting that they will be known through Divine Trial.

To lay further emphasis and demonstrate the ways of distinguishing believers from hypocrites the Verse reads:

“Surely We will try you till We test those who strive hard [for Allah’s Cause] and the patient.”

Thus pseudo-warriors and unprincipled and characterless hypocrites may be exposed.

The trial is vast in scope and covers patience and clemency in fulfilling all obligations; however, taking into consideration the word mujahidin:

(***“those who strive [in the Cause of Allah]”***)

in the preceding and following Verses indicates that trial on the battlefield is intended. Such battlefield is the arena of a hard and great trial in which few people may conceal their true intentions.

The Verse ends in:

“We shall test your facts [and deeds].”

Many an exeget have held that akhbar (“facts”) denotes deeds since whose news spreads among people. Some have also maintained that the word ad hoc is used in the sense of innermost secrets since they are reflected by deeds. The word may also denote the news which people communicate concerning their state or their responsibilities.

For instance hypocrites:

“had already made a covenant with Allah not to turn their backs”[10]

to the battlefield but they broke it.

A number of them also asked for permission of the Prophet (S) to return from the battlefield saying:

"'Our homes lie open [***to the enemy***]***.' And they lay not open. They but wished to flee"***11.

Thus Allah tries deeds, words, and facts. It is not the first time that people are informed of being tried so that a distinction may be drawn between true believers and hypocrites and those of frail faith. The point is raised in many instances in the Qur'an.

"Till We test those who strive hard [***for Allah's Cause***]***"***

does not connote that Allah is unaware of them but the Omniscient God is fully aware of them and such people and their stance are to be exposed through His Omniscience.

Surah Muhammad - Verse 32-33

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَشَاقُّوا الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَى لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئاً وَسَيُحْبِطُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَلا تُبْطِلُوا أَعْمَالَكُمْ

32. Verily those who disbelieve and hinder [***people***] ***from the Path of Allah and oppose the Messenger after the guidance has been clearly shown to them they will not hurt Allah in the least but He will make their deeds fruitless.***
33. O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and render not vain your deeds.

According to Qur'anic Verses and traditions, a number of words and deeds render vain diverse deeds, e.g. hurting the needy which renders vain rewards.

Following a delineation of the hypocrites' and disbelievers' stance against the Islamic faith, the Verse in question says:

"O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and render not vain your deeds."

The fact is that believers take an opposite stance in all matters against disbelievers and hypocrites. The former obey the Divine Decree where as the latter disobey It. The deeds of the latter are rendered vain through their disbelief, dissimulation, and hurting others but the rewards of the former are preserved at Divine Threshold.

The tone of the Verse indicates that there were believers at the time who failed to meet their obligations

in terms of obeying God and His Messenger and preserving their deeds from being rendered vain. God warns them against such neglect. According to some exegets, the occasion for the revelation of the Verse is the conversion of Banu Asad tribe to the Islamic faith.

They said unto the Prophet (S) that they were prepared to sacrifice themselves and their families for his cause, but their tone of speech somehow reflected the Prophet's (S) indebtedness for their favor. The Verse was sent down as a warning against their attitude.

Some experts in the field of Islamic law maintain that:

"and render not vain your deeds"

refers to the unlawfulness of leaving the daily prayers incomplete; however, taking into consideration the preceding and the following Verses as well as the Verse in question indicates otherwise. The Verse indicates rendering vain the good deeds out of polytheism, hypocrisy, hurting others and the like.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 34

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ مَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ

34. Indeed those who disbelieve and hinder [people] from the Path of Allah, then die while they are disbelievers. Allah will not forgive them.

God Almighty is All-Forgiving and man may turn to Him at all times for repentance, but those who die in disbelief, apostasy, and hypocrisy may never be absolved of their sins. The Verse explicates and emphasizes the points raised in the preceding Verses regarding disbelievers. It also demonstrates the path of repentance to those inclined toward it.

The Verse reads:

"those who disbelieve and hinder [people] from the Path of Allah, then die while they are disbelievers. Allah will not forgive them,"

since death serves as a hindrance against repentance. Such people carry the heavy burden of their disbelief as well as that of leading others astray. How may God almighty forgive them? Thus these Verses make mention of hypocrites, disbelievers, and believers together with a delineation of their attributes and fates.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 35

فَلَا تَهِنُوا وَتَدْعُوا إِلَى السَّلْمِ وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ وَاللَّهُ مَعَكُمْ وَلَنْ يَتِرَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ

35. Therefore, be not weak and ask not for peace while you are having the upper hand. Allah is with you and He will never decrease the reward of your good deeds.

Believers are not supposed to be weak since steadfastness and endurance are the prerequisites of triumph. Thus Muslims are supposed to enhance their morale and remind themselves of their values. Pursuing the discussion on jihad, the Verse refers to a significant point – people of frail faith often raise the issue of making peace with the enemy in order to flee jihad and the hardships of the battlefield.

Making peace is indubitably appropriate in its proper season. Such peace leads Muslims to the attainment of Islamic sublime goals and may vouchsafe the dignity and greatness of Muslims rather than leading them to humiliation and contempt. The Verse encourages believers that having heard the previous injunctions they are not supposed to be weak nor do they ask the enemy to make peace with them while they have the upper hand.

In other words, now that their triumph and superiority is evident they are supposed to consider the peace treaty which implies withdrawal and defeat. Actually, it is not peace but surrender and complacency springing from frailty. Such vicious complacency will engender perilous and excruciating consequences.

To invigorate the Muslims' morale, the Verse ends in

"Allah is with you and He will never decrease the reward of your good deeds."

When God Almighty is with someone, he will have all the means of triumph. He may never feel abandoned. He never entertains frailty in his heart nor does he surrender to the enemy.

Such person feels the responsibility upon his shoulders to not render vain the martyrs' blood shed in sensitive moments.

Wa lan yatrikum literally means "He will not abandon you," but it figuratively indicates

"He will never decrease [***the reward of your good deeds***]***").***

The root w–t–r denotes "to abandon" and watr is used in the senses of "single, separate, alone." Those whose kith and kin fall in battle and leave them alone are termed as witr. The word also signifies defect and shortcoming. The Verse in question says that God will not abandon you but he will provide you with the rewards of your deeds.

Believers are aware of the fact that each step taken for jihad will be recorded and nothing shall be decreased of their rewards but God Almighty is so Bountiful that He will increase them.

The above bears testimony to the fact that the Verse in question is by no means inconsistent with:

"But if they incline to peace, you are also inclined toward it and trust Allah. Indeed, He is the All-Hearer, the Omniscient"[12].

None of the two abrogates the other, but each of the twain makes reference to a particular instance. One refers to the sensible peace and the other to the insensible one. The former meets all the demands of the Muslims and the latter is raised at the threshold of triumph by Muslims who are frail of faith.

That is why the last Verse[13] follows thus:

"And if they intend to deceive you, then verily, Allah is All-Sufficient for you"[14].

In his epistle to Malik Ashtar, the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali (as) makes reference to both types of peace saying:

"Whenever the enemy calls upon you to make peace with him in which lies God's Satisfaction, do not decline the offer"[15].

The peace offered by the enemy and Divine Satisfaction indicate the division of the types of peace into the twain. Muslim leaders are supposed to use extra care in terms of distinguishing between types of peace and war which are among the most sophisticated and epoch making issues, since the slightest miscalculation will lead to fatal consequences.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 36

إِنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَإِنْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا يُؤْتِكُمْ أُجُورَكُمْ وَلا يَسْأَلْكُمْ أَمْوَالَكُمْ

36. The life of this world is mere play and pastime, but if you believe and fear Allah and avoid evil, He will grant you your rewards and will not ask you your wealth.

The preceding Verse was a warning against frailty and complacency against disbelievers. The Verse in question makes a reference to the main ground behind frailty – attachment to worldly possessions: "Be careful to not be deceived by the world."

The majority of people regard the world as the scene of pastime and pleasure, but believers consider it as the scene of Divine Manifestations consisting of Divine Signs, where they exchange the rewards of the Hereafter for righteous good deeds and obtaining merits and virtues. The blessed Verse encourages Muslims to obey God in general and raises the issue of jihad in particular.

It also refers to the vanity of mundane life since mundane attachments serve as a significant factor hindering people from engagement in jihad.

The Verse reads:

"The life of this world is mere play and pastime."

The word la'b ("play") is applied to involvement in a kind of imaginary order in order to attain to an imaginary goal. Lahw ("pastime") denotes what preoccupies man and leads to his deviation from fundamental issues. Indeed the life of the world is play and pastime since no advantage or permanence may be accrued from it. The pleasures of the transient world end in hardships.

The Verse further adds:

"but if you believe and fear Allah and avoid evil, He will grant you your rewards and will not ask you your wealth."

Divine Rewards in this world and the Hereafter are all non gratia. Neither He nor His Messenger (S) ask for anything. He is All–Sufficient and His Messenger solely needs Him and no one else.

The meager amount of your wealth which is paid as alms tax and other religious levies are spent for you, the upkeep of orphans, the needy, and the stranded poor travelers and also for jihad, defending the security and independence of the land, maintenance of peace and security, meeting the needs, and the development of towns and cities.

Such meager amount is paid for your own sake since God is All–Sufficient. Therefore, there exists no inconsistency between the meaning of the Verse in question and those concerning expending for Allah's Cause, paying alms tax, and the like.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 37

إِنْ يَسْأَلْكُمُوهَا فَيُحْفِكُمْ تَبْخَلُوا وَيُخْرِجْ أَضْغَانَكُمْ

37. If He were to ask you of it and press you, you would covetously withhold and He will bring out all your ill–wills.

The attachment of some men to worldly possessions is to the extent that even if God asks them for anything, they will entertain ill–wills against Him. Human character is exposed through his encounter with command and forbidding.

To demonstrate the extent to which most men are attached to worldly property and substance, the blessed Verse says:

"If He were to ask you of it and press you, you would covetously withhold and He will bring out all your ill–wills."

The word yuhfikum is from ihfa' ("press or insist in claiming and asking") is originally taken from hafiya ("go barefoot"). The expression is metaphorically used for the matters which are pursued by man to the

end, an instance of which is ihfa' sharib denoting trimming moustaches as short as possible.

Idhghan is the plural form of dhighn which is, as mentioned above, used in the sense of severe hatred. In short, the Verse indicates the severe attachment of many a people to material possessions and in fact serves as a reproach to those entangled with such attachments but in the meanwhile is a source of encouragement for severing such mundane ties which may grow to the extent that even if God asks them for anything, they will develop anger and hatred against Him!

Thus He awakens the dormant soul of man with such reproach so that he may liberate himself from the shackles of mundane possessions and sacrifice everything for his Friend and in return ask Him to bestow faith, piety, and satisfaction upon him.

Surah Muhammad – Verse 38

هَا أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلاءِ تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَبْخَلُ وَمَنْ يَبْخَلْ فَإِنَّمَا يَبْخَلُ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ وَاللَّهُ الْغَنِيُّ وَأَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ وَإِنْ تَتَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْماً غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَالَكُمْ

38. Behold! You are those who are called to spend in the Cause of Allah yet among you are some who are niggardly. And whoever is niggardly, it is solely at the expense of his own self. But Allah is All-Sufficient and you are poor. And if you turn away, He will exchange you for some other people and they will not be your likes [***in terms of frailty of faith and niggardliness***]***.***

People are to be called to spend in the Cause of Allah and help others; however, they should be free to think and make their choice. One who is niggardly assumes that he has deprived people of his possessions. The last Verse emphasizes what has already been raised in the preceding Verses concerning material possessions and attachments to them and spending in the Cause of Allah saying: Behold!

You are the same people who are called to spend in the Cause of Allah; some of you obey the Divine Injunction but some others are niggardly;

(***"yet among you are some who are niggardly"***)***.***

A question is raised here: God does not want your possessions in the preceding Verses; how come that the Injunction in this Verse concerns spending in the Cause of Allah? The Verse provides the answer to the question.

Firstly It says:

"whoever is niggardly, it is solely at the expense of his own self,"

since he will enjoy the consequences of his own spending in the Cause of Allah. In this manner, class gaps are diminished and security and peacefulness prevail in the society, and love and sincerity replaces animosity – this is your mundane reward. You will be compensated in this world and the Hereafter by Divine Bounties and Favors for each and every cent of your expenses in the Cause of Allah.

Such Bounties and Favors are not imaginable. Therefore, the more you are niggardly, the more you will pay for it!

In other words, spending in the Cause of Allah ad hoc refers to spending for jihad and the phrase

"in the Way or Cause of Allah" (***fi sabil 'llah***)

is consistent with the denotation in question. Rendering any assistance in the Cause of jihad for Allah evidently guarantees the maintenance of the integrity, independence, and dignity of the society.

The other answer to the question is that :

"Allah is All-Sufficient and you are poor."

He is Needless of your spending and your obedience, but it is you who are in need of Divine Favor, Mercy, and Reward in this world and the Hereafter. All possible beings besides God are actually in need and the only All-Sufficient Being by essence is God.

Possible beings are essentially and permanently dependent on Him and benefit at all times from His incessant fountainhead of emanation. Even if He ceases the emanation for one single moment, all existent beings vanish and

"all mold will shatter!"

The last sentence of the Verse is a warning to all Muslims to appreciate the great Divine Favor that He appointed you as the guardians of His pure religion so that you may support the Islamic faith and His Prophet (S).

Nonetheless,

"if you turn away, He will exchange you for some other people and they will not be your likes [***in terms of frailty of faith and niggardliness***]***."***

If you do not comprehend the significance of your situation and neglect such great responsibility, God Almighty will raise another people, far superior to you in terms of sacrificing their life and possession in the Cause of Allah, to fulfill such great mission.

A similar great warning is attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an:

"O you who believe! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion** [**may never harm Allah**]**, Allah will bring a people whom He will love and they will love Him; humble toward the believers, stern toward the disbelievers, fighting in the Way of Allah, and never fear of the blame of the blamers"[16].

It is interesting to note that the majority of exegets have related that following the revelation of the Verse a number of the Companions of the Prophet (S) inquired:

"Who are the people mentioned in this Verse?"

Salman sat close to the Prophet (S).

The prophet (S) put his hand on Salman's foot (or his shoulder as per another narration) and replied:

"This [*man*] *and his people* [*i.e., Persians*]*. I swear to Him in Whose hand lies my life, if faith be attached to Pleiad* (*Thurayya, a star proverbial for remoteness*)*, a group of Persians will get their hands on it."*

The above tradition and its likes have been recorded by prominent Sunni traditionists like Bayhaqi and Tirmidhi and Shi'i and Sunni exegets of renown, e.g. authors of Tafsir Qurtubi, Ruh al-Bayan, and Majma' al-Bayan, and Fakhr al-Din Razi, Maraghi, and Abu 'l-Futuh Razi, have unanimously transmitted them as genuine traditions. A number of similar traditions are to be found in the exegetic work titled Durr al-Manthur under the Verse in question.[17]

Another tradition narrated on the authority of Imam Sadiq (as) may serve as a supplement to the above tradition, saying:

"I swear by God that He has kept His Promise and a far better non-Arab people have replaced them."[18]

Taking a glance, devoid of any prejudice, at the history of Islam and Islamic sciences bears testimony to non-Arab, particularly Persian, contributions to jihad against the enemies of the Islamic faith on the one hand and their works in the field of Islamic sciences on the other. Space limitations hinder us from details in this respect.

It would be of interest to close the Chapter with a number of traditions on niggardliness:

The Messenger of God (S) said:

"It is not befitting a believer to be niggardly and timid."[19]

The Messenger of God (S) said:

"The twain character traits of niggardliness and bad temper may not be found in a Muslim."[20]

Imam Husayn (as) said:

“The niggardly person is he who is too niggardly to greet.”[21]

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“The best of you are your generous people and the worst of you are your niggardly ones. Doing righteous good deeds and struggling to meet their demands are out of pure faith.”[22]

Imam Ridha (as) said:

“The niggardly person is far from God, Paradise, and People.”[23]

1. According to a Prophetic tradition “Three groups will never enter Paradise: drinkers, sorcerers, and those who sever ties of kinship,” Saduq’s Khisal apud Tafsir-i Nimuna, vol. 7, p. 5.
2. 2:171
3. Majma’ al-Bayan, vol. 9, p. 105.
4. According to a tradition narrated from Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq (as) “who dislike what Allah has sent down” refers to Umayyads who were displeased with the Divine Decree regarding ‘Ali’s (as) Imamate, see Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 43, hadith 70 apud Mufid’s Rawdhat al-Wa’iÛin; Majma’ al-Bayan, vol.9, p.105. It is needless to say that it expresses the partial meaning of the Verse rather than the total meaning of the same.
5. Tafsir al-Burhan.
6. Majma’ al-Bayan, under the Verses in question. The general content of the narration is recorded in the sources by Sunni eminent scholars, e.g. Fadha’il by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Isti’ab by Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Ta’rikh Awwal al-Islam by Dhahabi, Jami’ al-Usul by Ibn Athir, Kifayat al-Talib by ‘Allama Ganji, Riyadh al-Nadhra by Muhibb al-Din Tabari, Durr al-Manthur by Suyuti, Ruh al-Ma’ani by Àlusi, and Shawahid al-Tanzil by Haskani. The inclusion of the narration in many a source bears testimony to the fact that it is a genuine Prophetic tradition. For further information, see Ihqaq al-Haqq, vol. 3, pp. 110 ff.
7. Nahj al-Balagha, aphorism 26
8. 9:84
9. Raghib’s Mufradat.
10. 33:15
11. 33:13
12. 8:61
13. 8:61
14. 8:62
15. Nahj al-Balagha, Epistle 53
16. 5:54
17. Durr al-Manthur, vol. 6, p.67.
18. Majma’ al-Bayan, vol.9, p. 108.
19. Mahajja al-Baydha’, vol.6, p. 74.
20. Safina, under bukhl (“niggardliness”); Bihar, vol. 70, p. 302; Khisal, vol.1, p. 38.
21. Tuhaf al-’Uqul, p. 283.
22. Bihar, vol.70, p. 307.
23. Safinat al-Bihar, under sakha’ (“generosity”).

Surah al-Fath, Chapter 48, Verses 1 - 16

(The Victory)
Section (juz'): 26
Number of Verses: 29

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The Chapter in question has twenty nine Verses and it was revealed in the sixth year following the Treaty of Hudaybiyya in Medina.

The Chapter in question mainly treats of the glad tidings as to the conquest of Mecca and the issues pertained to the Treaty of Hudaybiyya, pledge of pleasure (bay'at al-ridhwan), hypocrites' sabotage, turning one's back to jihad, and finally mention is made of the Noble Prophet's (S) Companions.

As the title of the Chapter designates, it beacons triumph and victory over the enemies of Islam, a remarkable a decisive triumph, be it the conquest of Mecca or Khaybar or the Treaty of Hudaybiyya or triumph in the broad sense of the word. To appreciate the contents of the Chapter, it is required, above all, to know that the Chapter was revealed in the sixth year following the Treaty of Hudaybiyya.

The Merits of the Recitation of the Chapter

According to a Prophetic tradition:

"One who recites the Chapter is on a par with one who served in the Noble Prophet's (S) army upon the conquest of Mecca."

It is narrated in another tradition that such person

"is like one who was beneath the tree in Hudaybiyya and gave him his pledge."[1]

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

"Preserve your wives and possessions from perdition through the recitation of

'Indeed, We have granted you a triumph.'

One who recites it at all times a caller shall call on the Day of Resurrection such that he will be heard by everyone saying:

'You are one of My sincere servants; take him to My righteous servants and admit him in bountiful gardens of Paradise and offer him the drink particular to the people of Paradise.'"[2]

It goes without saying that such excellence and honor may not be accrued with mere recitation devoid of thought and deeds, but the main goal of the recitation of the Chapter lies in establishing one's deeds and disposition upon the contents of the Verses.

Wondrous traditions are attested in Islamic sources concerning the blessed Chapter in question. According to a tradition narrated on the authority of Anas,

"Upon our return from Hudaybiyya, polytheists impeded us from entering Mecca and performing voluntary ('umra) pilgrimage.

We were deeply sad when God Almighty of a sudden revealed the Verse:

'Indeed, We have granted you a manifest triumph.'"

The Noble Prophet (S) is reported as saying:

"A Verse has been revealed to me which I love more than the world."[3]

Surah al-Fath - Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحاً مُبِيناً

لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيَكَ صِرَاطاً مُسْتَقِيماً

وَيَنْصُرَكَ اللَّهُ نَصْراً عَزِيزاً

1. Indeed, We have granted you a manifest triumph.
2. That Allah may forgive you your sins of the past and the future** [**attributed to you by Meccan polytheists**] **and complete His Favor on you and guide you on the Straight Path,

3. And that Allah may help you with invincible succor.

Qur’anic exegets disagree on the interpretation of

“a manifest triumph.”

Some of them, e.g. Alusi, Abu al-Futuh, ‘Allama Tabataba’i, and Faydh Kashani attribute it to the Treaty of Hudaybiyya and some others, e.g. Shaykh Tusi, Zamakhshari, and Fakhr Razi regard it as related to the conquest of Mecca and all of them have substantiated their views with certain traditions. The significance of the Treaty of Hudaybiyya lies in the fact that it served as a prelude to the conquest of Mecca and its ensuing remarkable triumphs.

Furthermore, to that time, polytheists solely entertained thoughts regarding Muslims’ perdition and did not recognize their position. Nonetheless, following the Treaty of Hudaybiyya, they recognized Muslims and such recognition served as a great triumph in the socio-political scene.

The

“manifest triumph”

makes a reference to the fact that approximately one thousand and forty hundred people were with the Noble Prophet (S) in the sixth year, but following two years, ten thousand people accompanied the Noble Prophet (S) in the conquest of Mecca.

There is not obscurity in Divine Guidance, rather all things are evident and illuminating including His Messenger;

(***“a Messenger explaining things clearly,”***)4.

His Qur’an is clear and illuminating;

(***“a plain Qur’an,”***)5.

It is expressed clearly and eloquently;

(***“This*** [***the Qur’an***] ***is a clear Arabic tongue,”***)6.

Its warnings are also unequivocal;

(***“He*** [***Prophet Muhammad***] ***is but a plain warner,”***7.

Even its war and peace is unambiguous;

(***“manifest triumph,”***)8.

Thus, those standing against such transparency are in manifest error

(***“And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed into a plain error,”***)[9].

The noble Prophet of Islam (S) is addressed six times:

“We have granted you triumph … for your forgiving, your sin, upon you, guides you, grants you succor.”

The word dhanb used in the second Verse signifies the consequence of anything and it is often employed in the sense of the consequence of sins and their evil consequences. Any truth seeking move is indubitably undesirable to those in error considering the call as sin and bring about diverse problems, concerns, persecutions, false accusations, conspiracies, and rumors against the callers.

Imam Ridha says:

“To polytheists, nobody was on a par with the Noble Prophet (S) in terms of the burden of sins, since he struggled against idolatry but polytheists worshipped three hundred and sixty idols prior to the conquest of Mecca. However, upon the conquest of Mecca and the decisive triumph of the Noble Prophet (S) and Muslims, all the faults remained concealed.”[10]

As a consequence, such sins were imaginative rather than actual thus regarded by polytheists and idolaters. It is worthy of note that the direction of prayers changed to that of Ka’ba in the second year following Hijra, i.e. the Noble Prophet’s migration from Mecca to Medina.

Furthermore, the Treaty of Hudaybiyya was concluded in the sixth year and the conquest of Mecca occurred in the eighth year when the Promise to the completion of the most exalted Divine Favors in future was proclaimed.

However, it was on the Noble Prophet’s (S) farewell pilgrimage (hajjat al-wida’) that the Promise was actualized through his announcement of ‘Ali (as) as the Imam, saying:

“This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion”[11].

Account of the Treaty of Hudaybiyya. It was in the month of Dhu al-Qa’da of 6 AH / March 628 that the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) departed for Mecca intending to go on pilgrimage. Having encouraged Muslims to accompany him on the pilgrimage, one thousand and forty Muslims wearing pilgrims’ garment accompanied him.

Apprised of the intelligence, Meccan polytheists stopped them in the vicinity of Mecca at the Village of Hudaybiyya and impeded them from reaching Mecca. Delegates from both parties entered into negotiations and the polytheists’ representative noticed that Muslims feel such love for the Noble

Prophet (S) that they take the drops of water used by him when performing ablution before daily prayers.

The representative informed polytheists of the same saying that they might not sever the bond between the Noble Prophet (S) and Muslims.

Representing Muslims, 'Uthman went to Mecca to negotiate with Meccan polytheists, but rumors became widespread that he had been murdered in Mecca. To keep Muslims alert, the Noble Prophet (S) had Muslims gather beneath a tree to renew his allegiance with them. The allegiance was termed Bay'at al-Ridhwan.

'Uthman returned safe after a few days. Participated by representatives from both parties, a session was held in which a treaty was drafted with a number of articles and 'Ali (as) wrote down the text of the treaty which was signed by representatives.

According to the treaty, both parties assumed obligations including: keeping away from engaging in war for a period of ten years; Muslims had to return from Hudaybiyya to return the next year for a three day pilgrimage to Mecca; the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) ordered that the camels brought for pilgrimage be sacrificed there; Muslims shave their heads and took off their pilgrimage garments to return to Mecca.

Although Muslims did not perform their pilgrimage rituals in Mecca, but the Treaty ensured that that there would be no war for ten years and performing the pilgrimage rituals would be unimpeded, hence the manifest triumph for Muslims. The Treaty put an end to polytheists' manifest enmity against Muslims, opened the path of propagation of the Islamic faith, and paved the way for consolidation of their might and the prospective conquest of Mecca.

It is worthy of note that we need to know that success and triumph springs from Divine Support rather than our thought, schemes, prudence, and might:

(***"Indeed, We have granted you a manifest triumph"***).

The other point is that the Noble Prophet (S) enjoys Divine Support as he is addressed in:

"We have granted you triumph, to forgive your sins, to guide you, to render you triumphant."

Thus, what God Almighty bestows upon man is the most exalted, the most manifest, and the best. He grants manifest victory, perfect bounties, guidance to the Straight Path, and invincible succor.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 4

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِيمَاناً مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيماً حَكِيماً

4. He it is the One Who sent down serenity into the hearts of believers so that they may grow more in faith along with their faith. And to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth and Allah is Ever Omniscient, All-Wise.

The Arabic word sakina designates serenity and calm. Whoever is granted such Divine Favor shall enjoy many a consequence. He is not afraid of being blamed. He puts his trust in God. If he loses something, he shall not be saddened by the loss. If he gains something, he shall not rebel nor shall he disobey Divine Commands. He shall not be affected by people's respect or indifference, fame, obscurity, poverty, or affluence.

In the same manner that frightening disbelievers is Divine Succor;

(***"We shall cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve,"***)[12],

serenity is also a Divine Favor granted to believers' hearts:

(***"is the One Who sent down serenity into the hearts of believers"***).

Therefore, peace of mind is solely possible through Divine Favor and it may not be accrued from any other source.

The aforementioned Verses reflect the Great Favors bestowed by God Almighty upon the Noble Prophet (S) as consequences of the manifest triumph, namely the Treaty of Hudaybiyya.

However, the blessed Verse in question treats of a Great Favor bestowed upon all believers:

"He it is the One Who sent down serenity into the hearts of believers so that they may grow more in faith along with their faith."

Believers shall definitely be rewarded by serenity and peace of mind, since;

"To Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth and Allah is Ever Omniscient, All-Wise."

The Arabic word sakina is cognate with sukun which designates such serenity and peace of mind that removes any doubt and fear from man's heart and makes him persevere in the face of the tempest of vicissitudes.

Such serenity may be ideological and remove ideological debilitation or it may be practical such that it may provide man with perseverance and patience. It is worthy of note that taking into account the foregoing discussions and the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse in question, it mainly alludes the former sense. Even if faith had not other fruits but such serenity and peace of mind, they would have sufficed to make man welcome it from the bottom of his heart.

However, the fact is that faith engenders many other bounties and favors.

Taking a glance at the states of believers and disbelievers reflects that the latter suffer from permanent anxiety and concern, whereas the latter enjoy unequalled peace of mind as a consequence of which they fear no one but Allah:

(***"And fear none but Allah,"***)[13].

Whether faith be taken in the sense of knowledge and awareness or the spirit of submission to God Almighty, it consists of different degrees and even love and passion together with faith are different.

The clause:

"so that they may grow more in faith along with their faith"

lays emphasis on the same truth.

Consequently, believers are not supposed to stay at one stage of faith, but they need to ascend to more elevated stages through self-purification through knowledge and practice.

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) that:

"There are ten degrees to faith in the same manner that one ascends the steps of a ladder."[14]

Each of the two clauses closing the blessed Verse in question,

"to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth and Allah is Ever Omniscient, All-Wise,"

reflects one of the reasons lying behind believers' serenity.

The former ensures man that if he believes in God Almighty; He shall support you with all the forces of the heavens and the earth. The latter says unto him that God Almighty is All-Aware of his needs, problems, struggles, and obedience. Having faith in these two principles will lead to his serenity and peace of mind.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 5

لِيُدْخِلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَيُكَفِّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ فَوْزاً عَظِيماً

5. That He may admit the believing men and the believing women to Gardens [in Paradise] under which rivers flow [beneath trees] to abide therein forever and He may expiate from them their sins and that is with Allah a supreme salvation and success.

Descent of Divine serenity increases faith and prepares the path for being admitted to Paradise.

Believers' great and real happiness and salvation lie in serenity in this world and abode in Paradise in the Hereafter.

A number of Shi'i and Sunni Qur'anic exegets narrate that upon the revelation of the opening Verses of the Chapter regarding the glad tidings to the Noble Prophet (S) as to manifest triumph, completion of Favors, Guidance, and Succor, concerned and saddened by the incident of Hudaybiyya, some Muslims said unto the Noble Prophet (S):

"Good for you since you have been promised so many Divine Bounties. What will be granted to us?"

Thus the first Verse was revealed bearing glad tidings to believers that they would be granted great rewards.[15] These Verses also treat of the Treaty of Hudaybiyya and its diverse reflections in people's thought and its fruitful consequences, specifying the fate of each group in the crucible of such ordeals.

The Verse opens by saying that another goal behind such great triumph was that believing men and women would be admitted the gardens of Paradise beneath whose trees rivers flow.

They shall abide in it for good and they shall never lose such great Favor;

(*"to abide therein forever"*).

Furthermore,

"He may expiate from them their sins and that is with Allah a supreme salvation and success."

Thus, against the four Favors bestowed upon the Messenger of God (S) in the manifest triumph, two great Favors were also granted to believers: everlasting Paradise with all its Bounties and forgiving of their faults besides serenity and peace of mind in this world. These three Favors constitute a great triumph and a grand salvation for those who pass the ordeals with flying flags.

In the Holy Qur'an, the word fawz is often collocated with 'adim and at times with mubin and kabir. In his Mufradat, Raghib says that fawz designates victory and attainment of good things together with health when it entails salvation in the Hereafter despite losing worldly bounties.

According to a well-known narration, upon receiving the blow on his head inflicted by 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam, the criminal of the time, Imam 'Ali's (as) shouted:

"By the God of Ka'ba I attained to triumph"

(and the letter of my happiness was signed with blood of my head).

Divine Ordeals are at times so difficult and unbearable that they uproot shallow faiths and turns hearts upside down; true believers enjoying the bounty of serenity may solely persevere and reap the consequences of their perseverance in the Hereafter and it is actually the great triumph.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 6

وَيُعَذِّبَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكَاتِ الظَّانِّينَ بِاللَّهِ ظَنَّ السَّوْءِ عَلَيْهِمْ دَائِرَةُ السَّوْءِ وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَنَهُمْ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيراً

6. And that He may chastise the hypocrites, men and women, and also the polytheist men and women who entertain evil thoughts about Allah [***say that God will not support His Messenger*** (***S***)]. ***For them is a disgraceful torment, and the Wrath of Allah is upon them and He has cursed them and prepared Hell for them and worst indeed is that destination***.

The Arabic phrase da'irat al-su' connotes unfavorable and far-reaching incident.[16] Following the treatment of the four Divine Favors bestowed upon the Noble Prophet (S) and believers in the preceding Verses, the blessed Verse in question includes threats against hypocrites and polytheists.

The torment of hypocrites and polytheists may not connote the torment in the Hereafter but it may refer to the torments and afflictions bred by hypocrisy and polytheism with which they were entangled following the Treaty of Hudaybiyya and the conquest of Mecca.

It is narrated that God Almighty shall never afflict any servant with torment following his repentance and asking God for forgiving his sins unless he entertains suspicion against Him and loses his hope of His Favor. Then the noble Imam recited the Verse in question.[17]

"He may chastise the hypocrites, men and women, and also the polytheist men and women who entertain evil thoughts about Allah."

Upon the departure of the Noble Prophet (S) and believers from Medina, hypocrites thought that they would never return safe and sound, as it is reflected in Verse 12 of the Chapter in question:

"Nay, but you thought that the Messenger (S) and the believers would never return to their families."

The word da'ira literally designates occurrences and incidents, good and evil, happening to man, but it ad hoc is accompanied with the word su' ("bad, evil") and connotes unfavorable incidents.

The other point is that:

"the Wrath of Allah is upon them and He has cursed them."

The blessed Verse finally adds that God Almighty:

"prepared Hell for them and worst indeed is that destination."

It is worthy of note that the majority of men were Muslim at Hudaybiyya and they were opposed by hypocrite and polytheist men, but the preceding Qur'anic Verses make mention of men and women in attainment to the great triumph and being afflicted with the excruciating torment.

reason is that the believing men appearing on the battleground may never succeed without being supported by believing women and likewise, hypocrite men may never attain to their goals without the support of hypocrite women.

Basically, the Islamic faith does not solely belong to men nor does it ignore women's characters and contributions; as a consequence of which whenever failing to mention women leads to exclusion of women, they are explicitly mentioned such that it becomes evident that the Islam faith belongs to humanity.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 7

وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزاً حَكِيماً

7. And to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth. And Allah is Ever Omnipotent, All-Wise.

God Almighty works through causes and ways.

The blessed Verse in question reiterates Divine Omnipotence and Greatness, saying:

"To Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth. And Allah is Ever Omnipotent, All-Wise."

Reference to Divine Omnipotence was already mentioned when the preceding Verses treated of the exalted states and Favors bestowed upon believers. It is reiterated herein in treating of chastising hypocrites and polytheists in order to indicate that God Almighty whose Commands are followed by all the hosts of the heavens and the earth is Omnipotent everywhere.

Those worthy of enjoying His Mercy are at all times provided with the same and whenever He is Wrathful against any wrong doer, he may not flee the same. It is worthy of note that when mention is made of believers, Divine Attributes of Omniscience and Wisdom, consistent with His Mercy are mentioned, but treating of hypocrites and polytheists, His Attributes of Omnipotence and Wisdom, consistent with torment, are mentioned.

"The hosts of the heavens and the earth"

include hosts of angels and also those of lightning, earthquakes, tempests, torrents, sea waves, and also

invisible forces lying beyond our knowledge since they all constitute Divine hosts and follow His Commands.

Surah al-Fath - Verses 8-9

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِداً وَمُبَشِّراً وَنَذِيراً

لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلاً

8. Indeed, We have sent you as a witness** [**over deeds**]**, as a bearer of glad tidings, and as a warner,
9. In order that you may believe in Allah and His Messenger and that you assist and honor him and that you glorify** [**His**] **praises morning and evening.

The Arabic verbal form tu'azziruhu derives from 'azara ("keep from") connoting that the Noble Prophet (S) should be preserved from any harm or harassment. The word shahid ("witness") may refer to a perfect model. Applied to the Noble Prophet (S), the word indicates that he is the perfect model for humanity.

The verbal forms tu'azziruhu and tuwaqqiruhu ("honor him") may refer to God Almighty, i.e. assist and honor Him. It may also refer to the Noble Prophet (S) and it is to be noted that honoring him is honoring God Almighty.

Verse 8 is addressed to the Noble Prophet (S) saying unto him that God Almighty sent him on the Prophetic mission such that he serves as a witness for people confirming the words of true believers and reject those uttered by hypocrites.

It is mentioned elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an that:

"The Messenger is a witness over them."

It may also refer to the Noble Prophet's (S) spiritual state implying that he attained to such intuitive knowledge that he may perceive through the eyes of his head and heart that he may bear glad tidings to believers that they shall enjoy Divine Mercy and elevated states in Paradise and he may warn disbelievers and polytheists against torments in Hell as the consequences of their polytheism and disbelieve such that he may impart the final argument to people and help them purify their souls.

Verse 9 is saying that thus he may show unto people the Path of Guidance so that through their intellect, they may believe in God Almighty and His Messenger (S), assist the True Religion, defeat disbelievers, and glorify God Almighty as a token of obedience to Him in the morning and in the evening. The Arabic

words bukra and asil designate morning and evening and may also refer to the prayers established at these times.

It is worthy of note that five significant injunctions are being mentioned as the causes and goals of the preceding attributes of the Noble Prophet (S).

Two injunctions concern obedience to God Almighty and glorifying Him and three Injunctions are related to obeying, defending, and honoring the elevated state of the Noble Prophet (S), saying that the goal of the Prophetic Call is that people believe in God Almighty and His Messenger (S), defend him against enemies, honor him, and glorify God Almighty in the morning and in the evening.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 10

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَمَن نَّكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنكُثُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهُ اللَّهَ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

10. Indeed, those who give pledge to you, they are giving pledge to Allah. The Hand of Allah is over their hands. Then whosoever breaks his pledge breaks it only to his own harm and whosoever fulfils what he has covenanted with Allah, He will bestow on him a great reward.

Muslim leaders are supposed to lay emphasis in critical circumstances and require their adherents to pledge allegiance once again.

God Almighty is in need of no one, thus man should abstain from unfaithfulness since Divine Might is superior to everyone else. In this blessed Verse, God Almighty addresses His friend, the Noble Prophet (S), saying unto him that those who pledge their allegiance with you have in fact sworn allegiance with Him, since Divine Omnipotence far exceeds people's might and those who have broken their allegiance have in fact broken their own character and have denigrated himself.

Au contraire, those who stand loyal to the pledge sworn with God Almighty through the Noble Prophet (S) and act upon their duties shall soon receive great Divine Rewards.

The Arabic word bay'a derives from b-y-' designating purchase and exchange.

The Verse is saying that one who swears a pledge with the Noble Prophet (S), it is as if he has entered into some transaction with God Almighty;

("Indeed, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their property for that theirs shall be the Paradise," [18]***).***

God Almighty has purchased believers' lives and possessions at the price of Paradise, since swearing

allegiance with the Messenger of God (S) is on a par with pledging allegiance with God Almighty.

"The Hand of Allah is over their hands"

refers to the fact that God Almighty regards the His Messenger's (S) hand like that of His own. In other words, the Noble Prophet's (S)'s hand at the time of pledging allegiance with him is actually His Hand, since His Messenger's (S) hand symbolizes that of God Almighty.

The blessed Verse reveals that swearing allegiance with the Noble Prophet (S) is in fact giving pledge to God Almighty, i.e. if God Almighty had Hands, He would regard the Noble Prophet's (S) hands like His own and giving pledge to him is in fact giving pledge to God Almighty.

The blessed Verse reflects the Noble Prophet's (S) closeness to God Almighty so that believers know that their allegiance with the Noble Prophet (S) stands precisely on a par with their allegiance with God Almighty, since the Noble Prophet (S) has attained to such elevated state of nearness to Him that he annihilated his self and has found everlastingness in Truth. Thus, his word and act stand on a par with those of God Almighty.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 11

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ شَغَلَتْنَا أَمْوَالُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا فَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا يَقُولُونَ بِأَلْسِنَتِهِم مَّا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ قُلْ فَمَن يَمْلِكُ لَكُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ ضَرًّا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًا بَلْ كَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

11. Those of the Bedouin who lagged behind [***in jihad***] ***will say unto you*** [***in order to justify their transgressions***]***: "Our possessions and our families preoccupied us, so ask forgiveness for us." They say with their tongues what is not in their hearts. Say: "Who then has any power at all*** [***to intervene***] ***on your behalf with Allah, if He intends you harm or intends you benefit? Nay, but Allah is Ever All-Aware of what you do.***

The Arabic word 'arab is ad hoc applied to anti-social and uncultured Bedouin. Unrefined people tend to show weakness in participating in jihad. Leaders are supposed to be forward-looking, predict the words and intrigues of opponents and hypocrites and think of appropriate reactions.

The blessed Verse in question is informing the Noble Prophet (S) that the Arabs who disobeyed his orders would apologize to him. 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas and Mujahid narrate that when the Noble Prophet (S) intended to depart for Mecca for performing 'umra pilgrimage together with a number of his companions.

Thus he summoned the Arabs living in the vicinity of Mecca bidding them to accompany him so that if the Quraysh engaged in fight with Muslims, they could render them aid. They thought that the Quraysh could defeat Muhammad (S) and his followers and they could lose their lives so they declined the Noble

Prophet's (S) request.

It was for this occasion that the blessed Verse in question was revealed informing the Noble Prophet (S) that the Arabs who failed to keep their loyalty to him following the Treaty of Hudaybiyya and pledging allegiance with him would come to him to express their apologies saying that their possessions and families preoccupied them and kept them from accompanying him.

Then they implored the Noble Prophet (S) to ask God Almighty for their forgiveness. They were hypocrites and what they uttered was not from their hearts. The blessed Verse in saying unto the Noble Prophet (S) that he needs to ask them if God Almighty intends to make them accrue benefits or harms who possesses the might to intervene on your behalf. God is All-Aware of what they do, their hypocrisy and lies. He is Omniscient of all outward and concealed affairs.

Surah al-Fath - Verses 12-13

بَلْ ظَنَنتُمْ أَن لَّن يَنقَلِبَ الرَّسُولُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَى أَهْلِيهِمْ أَبَدًا وَزُيِّنَ ذَلِكَ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَظَنَنتُمْ ظَنَّ السَّوْءِ وَكُنتُمْ قَوْمًا بُورًا

وَمَن لَّمْ يُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَإِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَعِيرًا

12. "Nay, but [your disobedience and flight was because] you thought that the Messenger and the believers would never return [safe and sound] to their families and that was made fair-seeming in your hearts and you did entertain an evil thought and you became a vain people going for perdition."
13. And whosoever does not believe in Allah and His Messenger, then truly, We have prepared for disbelievers a blazing Fire.

The Arabic word bur designates bankruptcy, disgrace, and perdition. Some deeds are evil by human natural disposition, but Satan and Concupiscence make them seem fair to man so that he may commit them. Those Arabs who had turned away from jihad thought that Muslims would all be defeated and killed; consequently, fear, meanness, deprivation, and disgrace fell into their share.

The blessed Verses in question address those Arabs saying unto them that they entertained suspicion and doubt imagining that the Messenger of Allah (S) and believers who accompanied him at Hudaybiyya would never return to Medina as they would be destroyed by the Quraysh. Satan made such evil thought seem fair to them.

"They entertained an evil thought and became a vain people going for perdition."

Consequently, they were deprived of embarking upon that historic journey, the pledge of the tree, and

other honors. It entailed such disgrace, perdition, and excruciating torment in the Hereafter.

Their hearts were dead as a consequence of which such dire fate was in store for them. Since such wrong acts sprang at times from faithlessness, Verse 13 is saying that:

“Whosoever does not believe in Allah and His Messenger (S), then truly, We have prepared for disbelievers a blazing Fire.”

Surah al-Fath - Verse 14

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاء وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاء وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا

14. And to Allah belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. He forgives whom He wills [***and deems it appropriate***] ***and punishes whom He wills*** [***and deems it befitting***]. ***And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.***

There are some instances when God Almighty says:

“Allah forgives whom He wills and chastises whom He wills.”

Taking into account Divine Justice and Wisdom, it may be said that man makes himself worthy of receiving

Divine Forgiving and Mercy and at times he makes himself unworthy of such Divine Forgiving and Mercy and accrues Divine Wrath and torment. Divine Forgiving precedes His Chastisement which indicates that the former precedes the latter.

The Arabic word sa’ir (“blazing fire”) indicates that for those who fail to believe in God Almighty and His Messenger (S) is prepared a blazing fire, namely Hell.

The verbal form a’tadna (“we have prepared”) and the contextual meaning of other related Verses demonstrate that Hell and Paradise exist in their places and whose gates are closed to us so long as we live but they shall be opened upon our death rather than as some have imagined will be created in the Hereafter.

It is worthy of note that Forgiving precedes torment. The close of the blessed Verse lays further emphasis on Divine Forgiving and Mercy, since these threats and warnings aim at educating people which necessitates that the path of return be open to sinners and even disbelievers; particularly owing to the point that most of such wrong deeds spring from ignorance.

Such ignorant people are supposed to be encouraged to ask for Divine Forgiving so that they may turn to the Straight Path and proceed toward belief in God Almighty and His Messenger (S).

Surah al-Fath - Verse 15

سَيَقُولُ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ إِذَا انطَلَقْتُمْ إِلَى مَغَانِمَ لِتَأْخُذُوهَا ذَرُونَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُبَدِّلُوا كَلَامَ اللَّهِ قُل لَّن تَتَّبِعُونَا كَذَلِكُمْ قَالَ اللَّهُ مِن قَبْلُ فَسَيَقُولُونَ بَلْ تَحْسُدُونَنَا بَلْ كَانُوا لاَ يَفْقَهُونَ إِلاّ قَلِيلاً

15. Those who lagged behind [***at Hudaybiyya***] ***will say, when you set forth to take the spoils*** [***of Khaybar***]***, "Allow us to follow you." They want to change Allah's Words*** [***to the effect that those other than the companions of Hudaybiyya were not supposed to participate at Khaybar***]***. Say*** [***unto them***]***: "You shall not follow us. Thus Allah has said*** [***about you***] ***in advance." Then they will say: "Nay, you envy us*** [***and do not want us to benefit from the spoils which is not true***]***." Nay, but they understand not except a little.***

The majority of Qur'anic exegets maintain that these blessed Verses treat of the conquest of Khaybar occurring in 7 AH/627, one year following the Treaty of Hudaybiyya.

It is worthy of note that according to traditions, it was upon the Noble Prophet's (S) return from Hudaybiyya that by Divine Command he bore glad tidings to those participating at Hudaybiyya that Muslims would conquer Khaybar and specified that they were solely supposed to participate at the battle of Khaybar; as a consequence of which they rather than those lagging behind, could have war spoils.

However, when these timid mammonists noticed that the Noble Prophet (S) shall definitely be triumphant at the prospective war and many spoils shall fall into the share of the army of Muslims took the opportunity to come to him asking for permission to take part in the battle of Khaybar.

They resorted to the apology that they intended to compensate for their past faults, repent of their sins, and serve the cause of the Islamic faith and the Holy Qur'an with sincerity! They were ignorant of the revelation of the Qur'anic Verses that disclosed their secret intentions:

"Those who lagged behind [***at Hudaybiyya***] ***will say, when you set forth to take the spoils*** [***of Khaybar***]***, 'Allow us to follow you.' They want to change Allah's Words*** [***to the effect that those other than the companions of Hudaybiyya were not supposed to participate at Khaybar***]***."***

It may be noted that in other instances such avaricious, indolent, and self-indulgent people fled hardships and perils and aimed at accruing mammons which entailed less hardships.

At any rate, the blessed Qur'anic Verses in question provides an answer to these opportunists:

"They want to change Allah's Words."

Then, it is further added:

“You shall not follow us.”

It is not what the Noble Prophet (S) says of his own, but

“Thus Allah has said [***about you***] ***in advance”***

informing Muslims of your future deeds. It is Divine Command that the spoils of Khaybar shall fall into the share of the companions of Hudaybiyya and others are not supposed to accompany them in this respect.

It is worthy of note that such shameless defectors persist in their false claims and accuse Muslims of entertaining envy;

“Then they will say: “Nay, you envy us.”

Thus, they even impliedly refute the Noble Prophet’s (S) words, claiming that they enviously impede them from taking part in the battle of Khaybar!

The blessed Verse closes thus:

“Nay, but they understand not except a little.”

Their misfortunes spring from their ignorance regarding God Almighty, the elevated state of His Messenger (S), man’s fate, and transience of worldly possessions. It is true that they were clever and precise in financial matters and personal gains, but they were too ignorant to exchange whatever they had with transient mammons.

Finally, the Noble Prophet (S), as per historical accounts, distributed the spoils of the battle of Khaybar amongst the companions of Hudaybiyya, even the person present at Khaybar who failed to participate in the battle of Khaybar, received a share. He is no one but Jabir ibn ‘Abd Allah Ansari.[19]

Surah al-Fath - Verse 16

قُل لِّلْمُخَلَّفِينَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى قَوْمٍ أُوْلِي بَأسٍ شَدِيدٍ تُقَاتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسْلِمُونَ فَإِن تُطِيعُوا يُؤْتِكُمُ اللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا وَإِن تَتَوَلَّوْا كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُم مِّن قَبْلُ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

16. Say unto the Bedouin who lagged behind: “You shall be called [***soon***] ***to fight against a people given to great warfare, then you shall fight them, or they shall convert to Islam. Then if you obey*** [***and embrace the Prophetic Call***]***, Allah will give you a fair reward; but if you turn away as you did turn away before, He will chastise you with a painful torment.”***

We are supposed to leave the path of return open to defectors without depriving them of the same for

good. Muslims are supposed to possess such military means and might that they be able to defeat their mighty enemies and make them surrender;

"You shall be called [***soon***] ***to fight against a people given to great warfare, then you shall fight them, or they shall convert to Islam."***

People reveal their inward secrets, sincerity, and hypocrisy in battleground.

In this blessed Verse, God Almighty says unto His Messenger (S):

"O Muhammad (S)! Say unto those Arabs who disobeyed the Messenger's (S) command and failed to accompany believers at Hudaybiyya and then offered their apologies and intended to participate at the battle of Khaybar with believers in order to have a share of spoils.

"You shall be called [soon] to fight against a mighty and bold. You need to confront them in battle so that they convert to the Islamic faith or surrender. If you Arabs obey Divine Commands and fight for Allah's cause, He will grant you fair reward, but if you turn away from departing for Mecca, as you did earlier, you will be chastised by God Almighty with excruciating torment. Now, who were these mighty warriors referred to in the blessed Verse in question?"

The sentence:

"You shall fight them or they shall convert to Islam"

demonstrates that they were not people of the Book, since they could not be required to embrace the Islamic faith as they are free to choose between conversion to the Islamic faith or recognition of the conditions of paying tribute to the Islamic state and living under the protection of Islamic rule through peaceful coexistence with Muslims.

Only polytheists and idolaters have to convert to the Islamic faith, since Islam does not recognize idolatry as a religion and it is permitted to force idolaters to forgo idolatry.

1. Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 9, p. 108.
2. Thawab al-A'mal, apud Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 46.
3. Majma' al-Bayan, loc. cit.
4. 44:13
5. 15:1
6. 16:103
7. 7:184
8. 48:1
9. 33:36
10. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn.
11. 5:3
12. 3:151
13. 33:39

14. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 69, p. 165.
15. Tafsir Maraghi, vol. 26, p. 85; Tafsir Abu al-Futuh Razi, vol. 10, p. 26; Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani, vol. 26, p. 86.
16. Raghib's Mufradat.
17. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 77, p. 399.
18. 9:112
19. Ibn Hisham's Sira, vol. 3, p. 364.

Surah al-Fath, Verses 17 – 29

Surah al-Fath - Verse 17

لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ وَمَن يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنهَارُ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ يُعَذِّبْهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

17. No sin is there upon the blind, nor is there sin upon the lame, nor is there sin upon the sick [***that they turn away from fighting in Allah's cause***]***. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will admit him to Gardens*** [***of Paradise***] ***beneath*** [***whose trees***] ***rivers flow; and whosoever turns back, He will chastise him with a painful torment.***

Legislators are supposed to attend to all legal aspects and stipulate specific laws for special cases (e.g. the lame, the blind, and the ailing). The disabled will not be deprived of being admitted to Paradise unless they obey Divine Commands to the best of their abilities.

It is reported on the occasion of the blessed Verse in question that upon being apprised of the order of engaging in jihad, the disabled entertained fear and informed the Noble Prophet (S) of their disabilities to participate in battles together with other believers and they were anxious of their fates.

Thus, the blessed Verse was revealed as per which there is no sin upon the blind, the lame, and the ailing if they fail to take part in jihad.

Irrespective of the occasion of revelation, it is evident that it applies to all religious obligations.

Thus,

"Whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger"

refers that believers are supposed to obey God Almighty and His Messenger (S) in all cases, be it concerning jihad or otherwise, and those who are disabled and owing to their disabilities fail to perform a number of their obligations, they shall be rewarded with Divine Bounties so long as they obey Allah and

His Prophet (S).

Au contraire, those who are able to obey Allah and His Messenger (S) but they fail to act likewise shall be chastised with excruciating torments.

Surah al-Fath - Verses 18-19

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا

وَمَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً يَأْخُذُونَهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

18. Verily, Allah was pleased with believers when they gave pledge to you under the tree [***at Hudaybiyya***]***: He knew what was in their hearts*** [***of faith and sincerity***] ***and He sent down serenity upon them, and He rewarded them with a near triumph.***
19. And abundant spoils that they will capture. And Allah is Ever Omnipotent, All-Wise.

Giving pledge is a religious obligation whose keeping is obligatory and whose breaking is unlawful and entails evil consequences. God Almighty is satisfied with the faith accompanied by loyalty to His Messenger (S). It is noteworthy that religion is not discrete from politics. God is satisfied with the believers pledging allegiance with their Prophet (S) in social and political issues.

The blessed Verses are revealed on the occasion of the allegiance pledged at Hudaybiyya hence its designation bay'a al-ridhwan. Believers gave their pledge to the Messenger of God (S) beneath a tree well-known as the tree of sammara (shajara al-sammara) at the village of Hudaybiyya.

God Almighty was Aware that their pledge was devoid of sincerity and they obey the Messenger of Allah (S) in jihad. Consequently the blessed Verses in question were revealed to bear glad tidings to believers that owing to their pledge four things fell into their share:

1. Obtaining Divine Satisfaction which is the most exalted Bounty.

2. Fortitude and perseverance through which their hearts find confidence and they persevere in their faith.

3. Triumph which will shall into their faith soon, be it in the conquest of Khaybar, or as some maintain the conquest of Mecca.

4. Abundant spoils which fall into their share. God Almighty is Omnipotent and Truthful and He acts upon Wisdom.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 20

وَعَدَكُمُ اللَّهُ مَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً تَأْخُذُونَهَا فَعَجَّلَ لَكُمْ هَذِهِ وَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَ النَّاسِ عَنكُمْ وَلِتَكُونَ آيَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا

20. Allah has promised you abundant spoils that you will capture and He has hastened for you this [the spoils of Khaybar] and He has restrained the hands of men from [inflicting harm upon] you that it may be a sign [and a lesson] for believers and that He may guide you to the Straight Path.

The preceding two Verses bore the glad tidings of early triumph which according to a number of Qur'anic exegets, e.g. Tabari, Shaykh Tusi, Zamakhshari, Maraghi, and Tabarsi, allude to the conquest of Khaybar. The fortress of Khaybar located two hundred kilometers from Medina.

The fortress had lofty fortifications and ten thousand Jews resided in it and were engaged in agricultural activities in its vicinity. This remarkably fortified fortress had an extraordinary and heavy gate which could be moved by forty people.

Since Khaybar had turned into the enemy base and the spy den of the opponents of the Islamic faith, Muslims departed for Khaybar one month following the Treaty of Hudaybiyya. In the outset, Muslims were headed by those who failed to do anything, until the Noble Prophet (S) said that he would give the banner to one who had obtained the satisfaction of God Almighty and His Messenger (S), one who is loved.

He handed the banner to Imam 'Ali (as) the next day. Imam 'Ali (as) departed for the colossal fortress of Khaybar with the Muslim army.

A Jew from the top the wall asked him:

"Who are you?"

He replied:

"I am 'Ali ibn Abi Talib."

The Jew shouted:

"O Jews! You shall be defeated."

It was at that time that Mirhab, the Jewish castellan proceeded to the gate to fight 'Ali (as). 'Ali (as) forcefully dislocated the gate and threw it aside, thus Muslims could enter the castle and conquer it.[1]

At any rate, the blessed Verse in question is saying that God Almighty has promised to reward believers before long with abundant spoils and impede the enemy from inflicting harm upon them. He made the conquest of Khaybar happen earlier so that believers entertain no doubts as to the words of the Noble Prophet (S) regarding their triumph.

It is definitely a reference to the conquest of Khaybar which occurred prior to the conquest of Mecca in the same year at Hudaybiyya. Further details are to be found in exegetic and historical sources.

The blessed Verse proceeds with two further Bounties:

"That it may be a sign** [**and a lesson**] **for believers and that He may guide you to the Straight Path."

Surah al-Fath - Verse 21

وَأُخْرَى لَمْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهَا قَدْ أَحَاطَ اللَّهُ بِهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرًا

21. And other** [**triumphs and spoils**] **which are not yet within your power** [**will fall into your share**]**, but Allah compasses them. And Allah is All-Able to do all things.

Promising the achievement of spoils in future rests on Divine Omnipotence and Omniscience. Qur'anic Verses engender trust in God Almighty and educating monotheists.

The blessed Verse in question informs believers that another spoil shall also fall into your share which stays beyond your power at the time or you are unaware that it is encompassed by Divine Omnipotence but its occurrence is predetermined.

What was beyond their power at the time could be the conquest of Mecca or other bounties fallen into the share of Muslims at the lifetime of the Noble Prophet (S). However, the wide application of the Verse and the word "abundant" in the preceding Verse include all the spoils to fall into the share of Muslims to the last day.

Surah al-Fath - Verses 22-23

وَلَوْ قَاتَلَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوَلَّوُا الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا

سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلاً

22. And if those who disbelieve fight against you** [**they fail to confront you and**] **they certainly will

retreat and turn their backs. Then they will find neither a protector nor a helper.
23. That [your triumph and disbelievers' fear of being defeated] has been the Way of Allah with those who passed away formerly and you will not find any alteration in the Way of Allah.

Weak Muslims attained to such might that their enemies could not stand against them. One who is not supported by God Almighty has no helper.

In the prayer of 'Arafa Imam Husayn (as) thus addresses God Almighty:

"One who has you [as a helper] has everything, but one who does not have you, has nothing."

In this blessed Verse, God Almighty informs His Messenger (S) that if the disbelievers from Banu Asad and Qatafan intend to wage war with Muslims, He will cast fear into their heart so that they turn away from battle and flee. Disbelievers will be defeated, denigrated, and helpless at all times, since they have neither friend nor helper. It is an allusion to the truth that God Almighty is the only true friend and support.

One who has not entered the stronghold of

"There is no god, but Allah"

has no refuge and may not achieve any success.

Verse 23 is saying that it has always been the Way of Allah that Truth and the followers of Truth are triumphant at all times as it is reflected elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an:

"Indeed, it is I and My Messengers who shall be the triumphant"[2].

It is evident that:

"Verily, falsehood is ever bound to vanish"[3],

since falsehood disappears before truth and things other than God Almighty and His Signs are false and nothing.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 24

وَهُوَ الَّذِي كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ عَنْهُم بِبَطْنِ مَكَّةَ مِن بَعْدِ أَنْ أَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا

24. And He it is Who has withheld their hands from you [at Hudaybiyya] and your hands from them in the midst of Mecca after He had made you triumphant over them. And Allah is Ever the All-Seer of what you do. [All triumphs and progresses are dependent upon Divine Will.]

The blessed Verse in question is saying that He is the One who withheld disbelievers from inflicting harm upon you at the heart of Mecca as he withheld your hands from them after He had made you victorious over them. God Almighty is the All-Seer of what you do.

Indeed, this account was a clear instance of

“manifest triumph”

in Qur’anic terms. A limited number without sufficient equipment entered the land of the enemy who had embarked upon military expedition against Medina and had left no stone unturned to defeat them. However, now that the limited number of Muslims penetrated their land they fearful that offered the peace treaty.

Could there be any more significant triumph that they conquered the enemy without the least bloodshed?

The Treaty of Hudaybiyya was indubitably a defeat for the Quraysh and a triumph for Muslims throughout the Arabian Peninsula since Muslims were able to cast fear into the hearts of their enemies. In other words, withholding from waging war is a reference to the Treaty of Hudaybiyya, since Meccan polytheists had prepared themselves for engaging in war against Muslims and the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) had pledged allegiance with Muslims to stay loyal to him.

Thus both parties were prepared to confront each other.

In the Treaty of Hudaybiyya, God Almighty impeded polytheists from attacking Muslims on the one hand and hindered Muslims from killing polytheists on the other. There were two reasons behind the treaty which were Bounties: preservation of the sanctity of the sacred precinct of Mecca which was not to be defiled by Muslims and the other Bounty was the ten year truce stipulated in the treaty in which the number of Muslims was on the increase.

Since Muslims did not shed the blood of any of the Meccans, they went on pilgrimage the following year and three years after that they gloriously conquered Mecca. These Bounties were all the consequences of the treaty. Had some polytheists been fallen, peace, truce, pilgrimage in the following years, preservation of the sanctity of Mecca, and perhaps the conquest of Mecca would have been impossible.

Consequently, the Treaty of Hudaybiyya has been regarded as

“manifest triumph”

which paved the path of penetration and propagation of the Islamic faith.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 25

هُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْهَدْيَ مَعْكُوفًا أن يَبْلُغَ مَحِلَّهُ وَلَوْلَآ رِجَالٌ مُّؤْمِنُونَ وَنِسَاء مُّؤْمِنَاتٌ لَّمْ
تَعْلَمُوهُمْ أن تَطَؤُوهُمْ فَتُصِيبَكُم مِّنْهُم مَّعَرَّةٌ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ لِيُدْخِلَ اللَّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ مَن يَشَاء لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا لَعَذَّبْنَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

25. They are the ones who disbelieved and hindered you from al-Masjid al-Haram and detained the sacrificial animals from reaching their place of sacrifice. Had there not been believing men and believing women [in Mecca] whom you did not know [owing to the command as to attack], that you may sill them and on whose account a sin would have been committed by you without [your] knowledge [We would have issued the command of waging war and attacking Mecca and confrontation with these disbelievers, but we did not issue such command], that Allah might bring into His Mercy whom He wills, if they [believers and polytheists] had been apart, We truly would have chastised those of them who disbelieved with excruciating torment.

The Arabic word ma'kuf is employed in the sense of an animal kept for sacrifice. The word mu'takif designates someone who makes himself bound to something or a place for some sacred cause. The word ma'arra indicates loss and the verbal form tazayyalu signifies "they had been apart."

The blessed Verse in question treats of Divine Favors bestowed upon believers such that war and bloodshed were removed from the people of Mecca for the safety of believers.

Thus it is said that though Meccan polytheists prevented Muslims from entering Masjid al-Haram and returned the seventy camels brought by the Noble Prophet as sacrificial animals from the sacrificial place, God Almighty lifted the command of war, since believing men and women lived in Mecca who concealed their belief out of fear and had there occurred a war between Meccan polytheists and Muslims, they would have perished without they being aware of the same and they would have been grieved.

Concerning the reason for accepting the truce with Mu'awiya, Imam Hasan (as) said:

"I avoided war out of discretion and defending their blood." [4]

Thus, God Almighty bestowed His Mercy upon Meccan believers and provided them with safety against being killed. It is also worthy of note that the prodosis of the law ("if") apodosis is deleted, in other words, had it not been for providing Meccan believers with safety against their lives, We would have commanded jihad against Meccans and you would have conquered them.

To lay further emphasis, the blessed Verse in question thus closes:

"Had there not been believing men and believing women whom you did not know, that you may

sill them and on whose account a sin would have been committed by you without [your] knowledge, that Allah might bring into His Mercy whom He wills, if they [believers and polytheists] had been apart, We truly would have chastised those of them who disbelieved with excruciating torment."

The verbal form tazayyalu ("they had been apart") derives from the root z-w-l ("disperse, scatter, break up, separate").

Based on numerous traditions cited in Shi'i and Sunni sources concerning the blessed Verse in question, it could be said that there were believers living amongst disbelievers and it was for their safety and God Almighty did not chastise disbelievers.

According to a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as), he was asked:

"Was 'Ali (as) not mighty and perseverant in God's religion?"

The Noble Imam replied:

"Yes, he was."

He was again asked:

"Why did he not destroy disbelievers and hypocrites when he conquered them? What did impede him from doing the same?"

Imam Sadiq (as) replied:

"Owing to one Qur'anic Verse."

He was asked about the Verse and he answered:

"The Verse in which God Almighty says:

'if they [believers and polytheists] had been apart, We truly would have chastised those of them who disbelieved with excruciating torment.'"

Then the Noble Imam (as) added:

*"There were believers under Divine custody residing with disbelievers and hypocrites and 'Ali (as) did not intend to kill fathers so that those under custody become apparent … and also our Riser (qa'im) of the Ahl al-Bayt ("the Noble Prophet's family") will not rise until such believers under Divine custody become apparent."*5

God Almighty is Aware that a number of their children will voluntarily convert to the Islamic faith and it is for their sake that He exempts fathers from immediate chastisement.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 26

إِذْ جَعَلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَأَنزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَى وَكَانُوا أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

26. When those who disbelieve had entertained in their hearts pride and arrogance, the pride and arrogance of the time of ignorance, then Allah sent down His serenity upon His Messenger and upon believers [and they prepared themselves for peace] and made them adhere to the truth of fear of God and they were well entitled to it and worthy of it. And Allah is the Omniscient of all things.

The blessed Verse in question treats of the account of the Quraysh whose arrogance and false pride of the time of ignorance and also their hatred against the Messenger of God (S) made them impede the Noble Prophet (S) and his companions who had set to enter Mecca, his hometown, on pilgrimage.

Although it was difficult for the Noble Prophet (S) and his companions, but since it was according to Divine Wisdom they had to tolerate them and their harms until the time of triumph and conquest arrives. Thus, they had to make peace with them and abstain from waging war and bloodshed.

Since it was Divine Wisdom and discretion, God Almighty:

"sent down His serenity upon His Messenger and upon believers"

so that they receive perseverance and serenity and obey Divine Command.

"And made them adhere to the truth of fear of God"

indicates that God Almighty made believers persevere in the fear of God which is

"There is no god but Allah,"

"In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,"

or

"Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah,"

with which the Quraysh failed to be satisfied and desist from entertaining the arrogance of the time of ignorance and disobeying Divine Command, though it was hard for believers to return without having gone on pilgrimage to Mecca.

"They were well entitled to it and worthy of it"

since believers, as required by faith, were God fearing and more entitled or worthy of fear of God Almighty or being granted serenity. Fear of God Almighty, the fruit of faith, had penetrated into their hearts, since whoever is more perseverant in faith entertains more fear of God. The believers accompanying the Noble Prophet (S) at Hudaybiyya persevered in faith and fear of God.

“Allah is the Omniscient of all things”

indicates that God Almighty is All-Aware of things in the world in terms of betterment and corruption. He was All-Aware that the Noble Prophet (S) and his companions were not supposed to go on pilgrimage to Ka’ba, but it was better for them to depart for Mecca that year and accept the peace treaty as the prerequisite for facile conquest of Mecca to happen in future.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 27

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّؤْيَا بِالْحَقِّ لَتَدْخُلُنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ إِن شَاء اللَّهُ آمِنِينَ مُحَلِّقِينَ رُؤُوسَكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ لَا تَخَافُونَ فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا فَجَعَلَ مِن دُونِ ذَلِكَ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا

27. Verily, Allah shall fulfill the true vision which He showed unto His Messenger in very truth. Truly, you shall enter al-Masjid al-Haram if Allah wills, secure, having your heads shaved, and having your hair cut short, entertaining no fear. He knew what you knew not and He granted besides that a near triumph.

Prophets’ dreams are among those which definitely come true. One of the manifestations of the inimitability of the Holy Qur’an is that it was prognosticated that Muslims would enter Masjid al-Haram in security and the same was realized. Man is unaware of the favorable or unfavorable consequences of his deeds; as a consequence of which his should obey God Almighty.

Muslims though about entering Mecca but God Almighty was Aware that the consequences of making peace would be far better. In fact, God Almighty made His Messenger’s (S) vision come true, since it was a true vision rather than a confused dream.

Its postponement was based on Wisdom. One of the reasons lying behind such postponement was to test believers’ perseverance so that perseverant believers be distinguished from non-perseverant ones.

The li- in li-tadkhulunna is an intensifying particle, though a number of Qur’anic exegets maintain that it is employed as a particle of oath indicating by God! God willingly, they will enter Masjid al-Haram the following year in triumph and glory, in which case, li-tadkhulunna is the prodosis.

It is said that

“If God wills”

designates that whoever God wills will enter since a number of companions might decease or there might be some other hindrance for them. Thus, whoever God Almighty wills and obeys the Messenger's (S) command will be triumphant and will enter in safety with their heads shaved and following performance of pilgrimage rituals.

"If God wills"

may also instruct believers to utter the formula before embarking upon doing anything. God Almighty was Aware of something of which believers were unaware and thereby preordained that prior to the conquest of Mecca there was to precede another triumph which was either the conquest of Khaybar or the Treaty of Hudaybiyya.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 28

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا

28. He it is Who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the religion that He may make it superior to all religions. And All-Sufficient is Allah as a Witness.

The secret behind the triumph of the Islamic faith is Divine Guidance and Truth;

(***"He it is Who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the religion"***).

Conquering falsehood by Truth is an ideal which may solely be realized by God Almighty. It is attested many a time in the Holy Qur'an that Islam is superior to all religions.

The superiority may indicate Islam's superiority in terms of scholarship, logic, and argument which has always been so, or it may also make a reference to the future when the Islamic faith will encompass the world over, when the inheritors of the earth will be righteous servants of God Almighty as the sovereignty of Islam wielded its sway in a vast area in the latter half of the first/seventh century.

The pronoun huwa

(***"He"***)

in the blessing Verse in question refers to Divine Truth and Simple Essence, in other words, God Almighty is He Who sent down His Messenger (S) with the means of Guidance, i.e. many a miracle, the Inimitable Qur'anic Verses, and manifest religion and laws and made him conquer disbelievers so that the religion of Truth, i.e. the Islamic faith, be manifest to all peoples and followers of different religions and they recognize that the religion of Truth is the Islamic faith and there exist no doubt for anyone as to its Divine Truth.

“And All-Sufficient is Allah as a Witness”

reflects that the Pure Essence of God Almighty is sufficient to bear witness to His Messenger’s (S) Prophethood and Truth in his words and deeds.

Qur’anic exegets disagree on the manner of the superiority and triumph of the Islamic faith over all other religions. Some maintain that the superiority lies in logical and argumentative aspects saying that such superiority has realized since in terms of logic and argument, the Islamic faith is superior to all other religions.

Some other Qur’anic exegets hold that superiority (li-yudhirahu) is employed in the outward sense of the word since it is attested in the same sense. thus, it may be said that many a vast area throughout the world are within the territory of Islam and in modern times, more than forty Muslim countries with a population of approximately one billion are under the banner of Islamic faith, but a time shall arrive in which all the world hold the same banner and it will attain to perfection through the Rise of Mahdi (as).

According to a Prophetic tradition,

“There will remain no house made from stone and mud, nor do tents made from wool and hair unless Allah makes the name of Islam enter them.”

The eminent scholar Tabarsi in his Majma’ al-Bayan cites a tradition from Imam Baqir (as) which is an interpretation of the blessed Verse in question, saying:

“The Promise given in this Verse shall realize at the Rise of Mahdi (as) from the family of the Noble Prophet (S). On that day, there shall remain no one on the face of the earth but those who acknowledge the Truth of Muhammad’s (S) Prophethood.”[6]

On the interpretation of the blessed Verse in question, Shaykh Saduq in his Ikmal al-Din narrates a tradition from Imam Sadiq (as), saying:

“By Allah! The meaning of the Verse is yet to realize and it shall solely realize when the Riser rises. Upon his Rise, there shall be no one denying belief in God Almighty throughout the world.”

The traditions concerning the Rise of Mahdi (as) are such that no Muslim scholar from any denomination may deny their consecutive transmission (tawatur). Many a book have been written in this respect whose authors have unanimously acknowledged the reliability of the traditions concerning the reformer of the world, Imam Mahdi (as).

These traditions are attested in many a well-known Islamic source including sunan, ma’ajim, and masanid books among which mention may be made of the following: the Sunan compiled by Abu Da’ud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Maja, Ibn ‘Amr al-Dani; Masanid compiled by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ibn Ya’la, Bazzaz; Hakim’s Sahih; Ma’ajim (Kabir and Mutawassit) compiled by Tabarani, Ruyani, Dar Qutni; Abu Nu’aym’s

Akhbar Mahdi; Khatib's Ta'rikh Baghdad; Ibn 'Asakir's Ta'rikh Dimashq.

It is worthy of note that a number of Muslim scholars have written books devoted to such traditions, e.g. Abu Nu'aym's Akhbar Mahdi; Ibn Hajar Haythami's al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar fi 'Alamat al-Mahdi al-Muntadar; Shukani's al-Tawdhih fi Tawatur Ma Ja'a fi al-Muntadar wa al-Dajjal wa al-Masih; Idris 'Iraqi Maghribi's al-Mahdi; Abu al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Mu'min al-Maghribi's al-Wahm al-Maknun fi al-Radd 'ala Ibn Khaldun.

A number of earlier and later scholars have also explicitly mentioned that the traditions narrated concerning Mahdi (May God Almighty Hasten His Rise) are indubitably consecutive in their chains of transmission, e.g. al-Sakhawi in Kitab al-Fath al-Mughith; Muhammad ibn Ahmad Safawini's Sharh al-'Aqida; Abu al-Hasan al-Abri's Manaqib al-Shafi'i; Ibn Taymiyya's Fatawi; Suyuti's al-Hawi; Idris 'Iraqi's al-Mahdi (as); Shukani's al-Tawdhih fi Tawatur Ma Ja'a fi al-Muntadar; Muhammad Ja'far Kinani's Nadm al-Tanathur; Abu al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Mu'min's al-Wahm al-Maknun.

The aforesaid traditions are cited in most of Shi'i tradition compendia and Qur'anic exegetic works under the blessed Verse in question.

Surah al-Fath - Verse 29

مُّحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاء عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاء بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِم مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَاةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَى عَلَى سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُم مَّغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

29. Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down in prostration, seeking Bounty and Satisfaction from Allah. The mark of them is on their faces from the traces of prostration. That is their description in the Torah. But their description in the Gospel is like a [sown] seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong and becomes thick and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers, that He may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward.

Muslims need to be severe, decisive, and firm against enemies;

(***"And those who are with him are severe against disbelievers"***).

The blessed Verse in question presents a clear depiction of the Noble Prophet's (S) companions, adherents, and those who followed him illustrating it with expressions from the Torah and the Gospel

which is a source of glory and pride for those who persevered at Hudaybiyya. It also provides Muslims of all ages with a lesson.

The blessed Verse opens with:

“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.”

It does not matter whether men of insignificance like Suhayl ibn ‘Amr like it or not or hide themselves from the sun shining on the entire world. God Almighty bears witness to His Prophethood and believers who are aware of it bear witness to the same. The blessed Verse then proceeds to present a depiction of the Noble Prophet’s (S) companions and followers.

Thus it depicts their outward and inward characteristics and also their thoughts, emotions, and deeds by enumerating five attributes.

Firstly,

“Those who are with him are severe against disbelievers.”

Secondly, they are

“merciful among themselves.”

Believers are like a hearth of emotions and love for their brethren, friends, and co-religionists and they are similar to a blazing and burning fire and a solid and hard wall against enemies.

In fact, their emotions may be summarized in their love and wrath; however, the existence of the twain is by no means inconsistent with each other, nor do their wrath against enemies and their love for their friends make them leave the path of Truth and Justice.

The third attribute treats of their deeds:

“You see them bowing and falling down in prostration.”

The expression of serving and worshipping God Almighty is depicted by the two main pillars of

“bowing”

and

“falling down in prostration”

as their permanent states. Such worship reflects submission to Divine Command and negation of arrogance and false pride.

The fourth characteristic reflects their sincere intention:

“seeking Bounty and Good Pleasure from Allah.”

They neither resort to pretension nor do they expect people to reward them, but they are solely attentive toward Divine Satisfaction and Bounty. It constitutes their only incentive in their lives.

The expression:

“Divine Bounty”

reflects their confession to their faults and regarded their deeds less worthy of Divine Reward.

Despite making efforts, they still say:

“O God! Woe unto us if you do not bestow Your Bounty upon us!”

The fifth and the last depiction treats of their fair-seeming appearance:

“The mark of them is on their faces from the traces of prostration.”

The Arabic word sima literally denotates

“mark”

be it on the face or other parts of the body. The word, however, is employed in modern Persian in the sense of “appearance.” In other words, their “appearance” clearly reflects that they are humble people before God Almighty, right, law, and justice and it is not only reflected on their faces, but also all their being and life indicate the same.

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) regarding the interpretation of the blessed Verse in question that the mark of their faces indicates:

“wakefulness at night for establishing prayer”

whose marks are visible on their faces during the day.[7]

It is worthy of note that these meanings and interpretations are all consistent.

Following such depictions, the Holy Qur’an adds:

“That is their [***the Noble Prophet’s companions***] ***description in the Torah.”***

This truth is already mentioned in the Scriptures revealed more than one thousand years ago. However, it should be borne in mind that the expression:

“those who were with him”

refers to those who stood with the Noble Prophet (S) in terms of thought, beliefs, ethics, and practice, rather than his contemporaries some of whom differed with him in the aforesaid terms.

The Holy Qur’an proceeds to treat of their description in the Gospel, saying:

“Their description in the Gospel is like a* [*sown*] *seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong and becomes thick and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers.”

The Arabic word shat’a denotes “sprout; chicken” but the word ad hoc signifies offshoot. Azara derives from ‘-z-r (“support, back up”). The verbal form astaghlada derives from gh-l-d (“become strong”).

The clause istawa ‘ala suqihi means “It is so strong that it stands on its own,” though the word suq indicates “stem, stalk.” The expression yu’jab al-zura’ signifies that fast growth and abundant sprouts and crops are to such an extent that even farmers who are at all times engaged in such things are perplexed.

Such people with these descriptions never cease for one single moment, but they always grow, sprout, and bear crops. They propagate the Islamic faith at all times throughout the world through their words and deeds and add to the number of the Muslim community each and every day. They never stop, but they always proceed and despite being pious, they are warriors too.

Despite being warriors, they are comely both outwardly and inwardly. They have vigorous emotions and pure intentions. They represent Divine Wrath in the face of enemies and reflect Divine Mercy and Favor before the friends of God Almighty.

The blessed Verse in question proceeds to say that such exalted characteristics, fast growth, and blissful movement serve as a source of encouragement for friends, but at the same time, enrages disbelievers;

(***“He may enrage the disbelievers with them”***).

Thus the blessed Verse in question closes:

“Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward.”

It goes without saying that the characteristics mentioned in the opening of the blessed Verse encompassed faith

and righteous good deeds. Thus, reiteration of these two characteristics makes a reference to its continuity. In other words, God Almighty has solely promised those among the Noble Prophet’s (S) companions that they remain in his line and perpetuate faith and righteous good deeds; otherwise, those who were among his friends and companions one day and left him the day after proceeding another path

contrary to his will never be rewarded by God Almighty.

It is also worthy of note that the clause

"And those who are with him"

does not indicate physical association and companionship with the Noble Prophet (S), since hypocrites associated with him, but "with him" definitely indicates being with him in terms of faith and fearing God Almighty. Thus, we may never make use of the blessed Verse in question to come to a conclusion regarding all the contemporaries and companions of the Noble Prophet (S).

It is interesting, however, that modern Muslims have distanced from the impressive guideline of the Verse and the descriptions provided in it regarding true believers and the companions of the Noble Prophet (S) and at times enter into such conflicts with one another, entertain hatred, and embark upon bloodshed and the enemies of the Islamic faith have never embarked upon the same!

At times, they establish such friendly ties with disbelievers that it sounds as if they are brothers descending from the same forefathers. Such bowing and prostration, sincere intentions, desire for Divine Bounty, reflection of the marks of prostration on faces, growth, sprouting, invigoration, and standing on one's feet are not visible.

It is also noteworthy that the more we have distanced from these Qur'anic precepts, the more we have entangled ourselves in pain and humility; but we are unaware of the sources of blows inflicted upon us. False pride and arrogance of the time of ignorance impedes thinking, revision, and return to the Holy Qur'an.

O Lord! Awaken us from such perilous and deep sleep!

1. Ibn Athir, al-Kamil, vol. 2, pp. 216-221. Besides Ibn Athir, the well-known Sunni historian, all Shi'i and Sunni historians and Qur'anic exegets have reported the account with minor alterations in details.
2. 58:21
3. 17:81
4. Ibn Athir, Kamil, vol. 3, p. 205, apud Imam dar 'Iyninnat Jami'a, p. 128; see also Tafsir Burhan; Tafsir Safi; Majma' al-Bayan under the blessed Verse in question.
5. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 70. Numerous traditions are cited in this respect.
6. Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 5, p. 25; Tafsir Qurtubi, under 24:55, vol. 7, p. 4692.
7. Man la Yahdhuruhu al-Faqih and Rawdhat al-Wa'idhin, apud Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 78.

Surah al-Hujurat, Chapter 49

(The Rooms)
Section (juz'): 26

Number of Verses: 18

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The Chapter in question has eighteen Verses and it was revealed in Medina. The Arabic word hujurat is the plural form of hujra. The fourth Verse of the Chapter treats of the rooms of the Noble Prophet's (S) house, hence the designation Hujurat ("rooms").

The Merits of the Recitation of the Chapter

According to a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

"One who recites Surah al-Hujurat every night or every day, shall be regarded as one of the visitors of Prophet Muhammad (S)."

It goes without saying that visiting the Noble Prophet (S) stands second to acting upon the rules mentioned herein concerning the Noble Prophet of Islam (S), since recitation is at all times a prelude to practice.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

1. O you who believe! Make not [a decision] in advance before Allah and His Messenger and fear Allah. Indeed! Allah is All-Hearing, Omniscient.

The three Chapters titled Ma'ida, Hujurat, and Mumtahana, opening with the clause:

"O you who believe!"

treat of social and political issues.

The blessed Verse in question intends to educate believers like angels, since the Holy Qur'an says regarding them:

"They speak not until He has spoken, and they act upon His Command"**[1]**.

The instances of making decisions in advance before the Noble Prophet (S) are not attested in the Holy Qur'an so that it includes prohibitions of making decisions in advance in doctrinal, socio-political, economic, and other issues in words and deeds.

God Almighty strictly forbids making decisions in advance before the leader of the Islamic community, since one who makes decisions in advance before God Almighty and His Messenger (S), causes disorder in the management of the Islamic system, leads the society to chaos, and in fact plays with the legislative system through his personal inclinations.

Acting upon the blessed Verse in question prevents from the emergence of many a flaw, since following surmises , inclination toward innovation, hasty judgment, and so-called liberal thoughts may at times lead man to making decisions that involuntarily does so in advance before God Almighty and His Messenger (S).

In like manner, some people aspiring to worship God Almighty, be decisive, revolutionary, pious, and leading a simple life make decisions in advance before God Almighty and His Messenger (S) and became more catholic than the Pope.

Therefore, acknowledging and acting upon social customs or secular laws and regulations which are not based upon the Holy Qur'an, traditions of the Noble Prophet (S) and the Infallible Imams (as), and human intellect and his natural and innate disposition (fitra) are all instances of making decisions in advance before God Almighty and His Messenger (S).

At any rate, God Almighty addresses believers in the blessed Verse in question saying:

"O you who believe! Make not [a decision] in advance before Allah and His Messenger (S)."

Believers are hereby asked not to obey anyone besides God Almighty and His Messenger (S). They are supposed not to say anything against the Book and Prophetic traditions (sunna).

"Fear Allah"

and withhold from disobeying Divine Commands and know that:

"Indeed! Allah is All-Hearing, Omniscient."

He hears your words and He is All-Aware of your deeds.

It is worthy of note that a number of Qur'anic exegets concerning the occasion of the revelation of the

blessed Verse in question have said that it makes a reference to the deeds of some Muslims who performed some of their devotion rituals prior to their due time; as a consequence of which the blessed Verse in question was revealed to forbid them from embarking upon the same.[2] For the sake of brevity, other views are not mentioned herein.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 2

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

2. O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him in talk as you speak aloud to one another, lest* [*for the sake of such indecency*] *your deeds should be rendered fruitless while you perceive not.

The preceding Verse forbade believers from making decisions in advance before the Messenger of Allah (S) and Divine Commands and the blessed Verse in question treats of speaking aloud in the presence of the Noble Prophet (S).

It is mentioned elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[3]:

"Make not the calling of the Messenger* (*S*) *among you as you call one another."

The blessed Verse in questions says:

"Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him in talk as you speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds should be rendered fruitless while you perceive not."

The first clause,

"Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet,"

designates that such manner of speech before the Noble Prophet (S) is an act of indecency. One is not supposed to show such indecency before one's parents and teachers either.

The following clause,

"nor speak aloud to him in talk as you speak aloud to one another,"

may either lay further emphasis on the preceding one or make a reference to a novel point which is forbidding believers to address the Noble Prophet (S) by the phrase:

"O Muhammad!"

rather than

"O Messenger of Allah!"

Regarding the difference between the twain clauses, a number of Qur'anic exegets maintain that the former indicates that in speaking to the Noble Prophet (S) people were not supposed to raise their voices above his voice and the latter designates that when the Noble Prophet (S) was silent and people were talking to him, they were not supposed to raise their voices either.

It goes without saying that if such acts of indecency aim at affronting the most exalted state of Prophethood, they will lead to disbelief and without aiming at abusing his most exalted state, they will be regarded as abuse and sin. It is evident that the former results in rendering one's good deeds fruitless, since disbelief leads to the same.

The latter may also lead to the same since such acts of indecency end in rendering many a righteous good deed fruitless owing to committing certain sins; in like manner, some of the sins committed may be definitely absolved through righteous good deeds. It is worthy of note that it is a general rule concerning righteous good deeds and sins and the same stands to reason as well.

According to a tradition, upon the revelation of the blessed Verse in question, Thabit ibn Qays, the preacher of the Noble Prophet (S) who was loud spoken, said:

"It was I who raised my voice above that of the Noble Prophet (S). My righteous good deeds have been all rendered fruitless and I am one of the people of the Hell."

Informed of his words, the Noble Prophet (S) said:

"It is not so. He is one of the people of Paradise, since he acted upon his duty when he delivered a sermon for believers or against opponents."[4]

Likewise, it was in the battle of Hunayn and at the behest of the Noble Prophet (S) that 'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib called loudly to deserters to return.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 3

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَغُضُّونَ أَصْوَاتَهُمْ عِندَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُوْلَئِكَ الَّذِينَ امْتَحَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلتَّقْوَى لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

3. Indeed, those who lower their voices in the presence of Allah's Messenger (for the sake of good manners and their respect for him], they are the ones whose hearts Allah has tested [and prepared] for [entertaining] piety. For them are forgiveness and a great reward.

The Arabic word ghadhdh is used in the sense of "lower, cast down."

It is employed in the Holy Qur'an in the senses of lowering one's voice and glance; for instance, lower one's glance to avoid from looking at those outside the circle of close kinship as it is attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an:

"Tell the believing men to lower their glance [***from looking at forbidden things and persons***]***"***[5].

It should be borne in mind that we have to censure the wrong-doing and encourage the good-doing.

The preceding blessed Verse reproaches those who raised their voices in the presence of the Noble Prophet (S) and the blessed Verse in question and the following ones encourage decent people;

(***"Indeed, those who lower their voices in the presence of Allah's Messenger*** (***for the sake of good manners and their respect for him***)***, they are the ones whose hearts Allah has tested*** [***and prepared***] ***for*** [***entertaining***] ***piety. For them are forgiveness and a great reward"***).

At any rate, the blessed Verse makes a reference to the pious whose characteristics includes speaking softly in the presence of the Noble Prophet (S) and never raise their voices above that of the Noble Prophet (S), since his exalted state and grandeur have penetrated in their hearts such that they are so modest that they never raise their voices before him but they lower them. Divine Reward and Forgiving are in store for such people.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verses 4-5

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُنَادُونَكَ مِن وَرَاء الْحُجُرَاتِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

4. Indeed those who call you from behind the rooms, most of them refrain from intellection.
5. And if they had patience till you could come out to them, it would have been definitely better for them. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Social decorum has the prime of place in Islam. Some of the rules of etiquette are mentioned in this Chapter, hence its designation Surah al-Adab ("The Chapter of Manners").

Each of the rooms of the Noble Prophet's (S) house was devoted to one of his wives. These rooms were quite simple, but unfortunately, they were destroyed under the caliphate of Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik and their spaces were annexed to a mosque.[6] Had these rooms been preserved, the world would have been able to notice the simplicity of their life and they would have received a lesson concerning the same.

Bad manners indicate insensibility.

Imam ‘Ali (as) says:

“One devoid of reason lacks good manners.”

Thus it is said in the blessed Verses in question:

“O Muhammad! Those who call you from behind the rooms, most of them are ignorant. If they had reason and could understand your exalted state of Prophethood, they ceased to do so. Had they had patience until you left the room, it would have been better for them, since they could reflect their understanding and modesty.”

The blessed Verses apparently make mention of those people concerning whom the blessed Verses were revealed.

Some Qur’anic exegets have also said that the blessed Verses indicate that the Noble Prophet (S) is not supposed to be called:

“O Muhammad! O Ahmad!”

in the manner that they call themselves, but they are supposed to called him as:

“O Messenger of Allah! O Prophet of Allah!”

They maintain that the blessed Verses in question are like the other Qur’anic Verse[7]:

“Make not the calling of the Messenger among you as you call one another.”

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 6

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

6. O you who believe! If an evil-doer comes to you with important news, verify it, lest you should harm people in ignorance* [*out of haste in belief and making decision*]*, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done.

Addressed to believers, the blessed Verse in question is saying that if an evil-doer comes to you with intelligence, do not acknowledge it unless you investigate its veracity, otherwise if you do something in ignorance, you may have done something wrong and thereafter you may regret what you have done.

A number of jurisprudents make use of the blessed Verse in question to argue the authenticity of a tradition transmitted by one single but honest transmitter, since the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse indicates that the intelligence imparted by a wrong-doer is not to be trusted.

Concerning the occasion of the revelation of the blessed Verse in question, it is said that the Noble Prophet (S) dispatched Walid ibn 'Uqba ibn Abi Mu'it to collect the alms tax from Banu Mustaliq. The latter intended to pay homage to him and in so doing went to welcome him.

Upon seeing them, Walid was afraid and thought that they were there to take his life. Thus, he returned to the Noble Prophet (S) saying that they failed to pay the alms tax and intended to take his life.

The Noble Prophet (S) became sad, but they came unto him saying:

"We had come to pay homage to your messenger by welcoming him, but upon seeing us, he returned and we are unaware as to the reason behind his return. Now, we have come to see whether he conveyed the truth. The alms tax is ready. Send someone to collect it."

The Noble Prophet (S) summoned Khalid ibn Walid and ordered him confidentially to go to them and see if they acted upon Islamic precepts and collect the alms tax if he sees that they act upon precepts but confront them like disbelievers if they fail to act upon them. When Khalid reached there, he heard the evening call to prayer. He collected the alms tax and returned.

It was then that the blessed Verse in question;

(***"O you who believe! If an evil-doer comes to you with important news, verify it, lest you should harm people in ignorance*** [***out of haste in belief and making decision***]***, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done"***)

was revealed. Another occasion for the revelation of the blessed Verse is reported but for the sake of brevity, mention is not herein made of the same.

Now, let us take a glance at the meaning of fisq ("wrong-doing") and fasiq ("wrong-doer"). The Arabic word fisq denotes deviation and in Qur'anic terms, it connotes deviation from the straight path. The word is the antonym of 'adala ("justice") and fasiq is applied to someone who commits a grave sin but fails to repent it.

The Arabic word fisq is employed in different contexts in the Holy Qur'an, including: disobedience of the Pharaoh and his people to Allah:

(***"Indeed they are a people who are disobedient to Allah,"***)8***;***

Hypocrisy:

(***"Indeed, the hypocrites are disobedient to Allah,"***)9***;***

abusing Prophets and disobedience to their injunctions:

(***"They said: 'O Moses! We shall never enter it so long as they are there. Therefore, go you and***

your Lord and fight you two, we are sitting right here.' He said: 'O my Lord! I have power only over myself and my brother, so separate us from the people who are disobedient to Allah.'")10***;***

those who do not judge based on Divine Law:

(***"Let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed therein. And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such people are disobedient to Allah."***)11***;***

the deceitful:

(***"And ask them about the town that was by the sea; when they transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath, when their fish came to them openly on the Sabbath and did not come to them on the day they had no Sabbath. Thus, We made a trial of them, for they used to disobey Allah."***)12***;***

those who leave aside the significant obligation of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil:

(***"Therefore, when they forgot the reminding that had been given to them, We rescued those who forbade evil, but We seized those who did wrong with a severe torment because they used to disobey Allah."***)13***;***

those who prefer their families and worldly possessions over jihad for Allah's Cause:

(***"O you who believe! Take not as helpers your fathers and your brothers if they prefer disbelief to belief. And whoever of you does so, then he is one of the wrong-doers."***)14***;***

obvious sins and sexual deviations and unlawful sexuality:

(***"Indeed, We are about to bring down on the people of this town a great torment from the sky, because they have been disobedient to Allah."***)15***;***

consumption of unlawful food:

(***"Unlawful to you are dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which Allah's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns and that which has been*** [***partly***] ***eaten by a wild animal unless you are able to slaughter it*** [***before its death***] ***and that which is sacrificed on stone altars. Unlawful is also to use arrows seeking luck or decision; all that is disobedience to Allah."***)16***;***

accusing chaste women:

(***"And those who accuse chaste women, and produce not four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their testimony forever. Indeed, they are disobedient to Allah."***)17***.***

Other instances are not mentioned for the sake of brevity.

The Holy Qur'an harshly criticizes those who hear rumors and disseminate the same without investigation as to their authenticity

(***"When there comes to them some matter touching public safety or fear, they make it known. If only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority amongst them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them. Had it not been for Allah's Favor and Mercy bestowed upon you, you would have followed Satan, but a few of you."***)[18].

The Holy Qur'an has stipulated a harsh chastisement for those who agitate the society through spreading false news among people:

(***"If the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease and those who spread false news amongst the people in Medina do not cease*** [***their activities***]***, We shall certainly let you overpower them. Then, they will not be able to stay in it as your neighbors but a little while."***)[19].

In his last year of life, when the Noble Prophet (S) was on pilgrimage he said:

"Those who spread false news are large in number and their number will grow in future. Whoever voluntarily accuses me of lying shall abide in Hell. Compare whatever you hear concerning me against the Holy Qur'an and my traditions (sunna). If you find them consistent with them, acknowledge them, but you do not, reject them."[20]

Imam Sadiq (as) cursed a certain person who falsely attributed traditions to his father (as) saying:

"Whatever you hear from us compare it against the Holy Qur'an or our words, if you find testimony for the same, you may accept them, otherwise do not acknowledge them."[21]

Imam Ridha (as) said:

"Our words are substantiated by the Holy Qur'an and Prophetic traditions."[22]

It is worthy of note that one of the most significant of Islamic sciences is that of transmission authorities (rijal) by which sound and unsound traditions narrated by transmitters may be assayed. Believers are supposed to be interested in investigation of matters rather than being superficial and look at matters simplistically.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verses 7-8

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ
إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُونَ

فَضْلاً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

7. And know that among you there is the Messenger of Allah** [**whom you should obey**]**. If he were to obey you in much of the matter, you would surely be in trouble. But Allah has endeared your faith to you and has beautified it in your hearts, and has made disbelief, disobedience** [**to Allah**]**, and committing sin hateful to you. Such are they who are the rightly guided.
8.** [**This interest in belief and hate of disbelief are**] **a Bounty from Allah and His Favor. And Allah is Omniscient, All-Wise.

Mention was made under the preceding Verse of Walid ibn 'Uqba's false report about people's failure to pay alms tax to the Noble Prophet (S) and people's besiege toward attack when the preceding blessed Verse was revealed as per which Muslims are supposed to investigate and assay the news reported by wrong-doers.

The blessed Verse in question is saying that people are basically supposed to obey the Noble Prophet (S) and the divinely appointed leader is not supposed to be affected by the frantic effervescence arising from the reports imparted by wrong-doers. There are traditions to the effect that endearment of believers indicates treading the straight path otherwise wayfarers are in error.23

According to traditions, one of the tokens of faith attested in:

"Allah has endeared your faith to you"

is love for 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) and disbelief and disobedience to Allah are on a par with enmity against the Noble Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt ("family").24

If the decision maker happens not to be just or infallible, policy making will lead to despotism which leaves no room for growth

(***"And the command of Pharaoh was no right guide,"***)25.

Au contraire, if the decision maker happens to be infallible or just, the ground is paved for growth;

(***"Such are they who are the rightly guided"***).

Thus, addressing believers, the blessed Verse aims at guiding them saying that the Messenger of Allah (S) is amongst you and you are supposed to obey his commands rather than expect him to obey you, since had he acted upon your wish, you believers, unaware of your gain and loss, would have been in trouble and hardship.

Furthermore, when you deviate from the right path, your faith will be penetrated by flaws. However, God Almighty has endeared your faith to you and has embellished it in your hearts, and has made disbelief, disobedience to Allah, and committing sin hateful to you.

Such people are the rightly guided. It is mentioned in the following Verse that if you obey the Messenger of Allah's (S) commands, faith shall be deeply rooted in our heart and you shall clearly perceive the truth of the Islamic faith; thus, your hearts shall be illumined by the light of the Islamic faith and you will find Guidance through your belief in Islam which is Divine Bounty and Favor bestowed upon whomever He wills.

God Almighty is Omniscient and All-Aware of your states and deeds and has set everything in its proper place.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 9

وَإِن طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِن بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِن فَاءتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

9. And if two parties or groups among the believers engage in fighting, then make peace between them both. But if one of them outrages against the other, then fight you against the one that outrages till it complies with the Command of Allah. Then if it complies [***and ceases outrage***]***, then make reconciliation between them justly, and be equitable. Indeed! Allah loves those who are equitable.***

Although faith requires abstention from fighting and confrontation amongst believers, but the fact is that believers are not infallible and uttering one single word or doing one single act may lead to confrontation amongst them.

According to a tradition, believers are supposed to render aid to their brethren, either wrong- doer or wronged. If he is wronged, help him to reclaim what is due to him and if he is a wrong-doer, to prevent him from wrong-doing.[26] To reconcile Muslims, one is supposed to act immediately.

It is worthy of note that the conjunction fa- in fa-aslihu

(***"then make reconciliation"***)

indicates immediacy.

It is reported regarding the occasion of revelation of the blessed Verse in question that there emerged a contention between Aws and Khazraj, the two Medinan tribes of renown and some people from these the twain tribes engaged in some conflict and hit each other with wooden sticks and sandals.

The blessed Verse in question was revealed and Muslims were provided with instructions as to encountering such incidents.[27] It is also reported that some contention emerged between two persons from Helpers (ansar).

One said unto the other:

“I will reclaim from you what is due to me by force, since the population of my tribe exceeds yours.”

The other person suggested that they should consult with the Noble Prophet (S). The former declined the suggestion and there emerged a conflict between them and their supporters from the twain tribes. They attacked each other with sandals and even swords. It was then that the blessed Verse in question was revealed and clarified Muslims’ obligations against such disagreements.

As a general rule applicable anywhere and anytime, the Holy Qur’an says:

“And if two parties or groups among the believers engage in fighting, then make peace between them both.”[28]

The verbal form iqtatalu is from q-t-l (“fight”), but the context reflects that it encompasses any kind of contention and conflict, even if it has not resulted in fight and war. Some of the aforesaid occasions of revelation substantiate the meaning in question.

Furthermore, it could be said that when the ground is paved for conflict and contention, for instance disputations and clashes as preludes to bloody conflicts occur, it is incumbent upon Muslims to take reconciliatory measures, since the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse in question may be inferred through specification.

At any rate, it is incumbent upon all Muslims to prevent from occurrence of contention, conflict, and bloodshed amongst Muslims and assume responsibility in this respect rather than stay aside like indifferent and ignorant onlookers passing by such scenes. It is the first obligation of Muslims with respect to such incidents.

Then, the second obligation is thus expressed:

“But if one of them outrages against the other, then fight you against the one that outrages till it complies with the Command of Allah.”

It goes without saying that if the blood of the disobedient and wrong-doing tribe, despite being Muslim, is shed, they are to blame for the bloodshed, since it is taken for granted that the incident concerns a conflict between two Muslim tribes. Thus, Islam requires that wrong-doing be hindered and justice is to be administered through reconciliation but in case it fails, it should be administered even if Muslims’ blood be shed.

Then, mention is made of the third injunction:

“Then if it complies [and ceases outrage], then make reconciliation between them justly, and be equitable.”

In other words, Muslims are not supposed to be content with shattering the power of the wrong-doing tribe, but their fight should serve as a prelude to peace and eradication of the causes of contention and conflict; otherwise, the wrong-doer will shortly resume the conflicts as soon as he feels competent enough to embark upon the same.

Taking into account the adverbial phrase bi-'l-'adl ("justly"), some Qur'anic exegets hold that had some right been trampled or some bloodshed leading to contention

and conflict, just reconciliation should be made in this respect, otherwise it may not be termed "just reconciliation" (islah bi-'l-'adl).29

Since inclination toward some groups at times make people tend toward either of the "twain conflicting tribes" and the same violates the arbiters' impartiality, thus the Holy Qur'an warns Muslims in the fourth and the last injunction:

"Be equitable. Indeed! Allah loves those who are equitable."

The blessed Verse in question closes with three injunctions as to establishing peace and reconciliation amongst people based on justice:

"Make reconciliation between them justly, and be equitable. Indeed! Allah loves those who are equitable."

It is worthy of note that creation is based on justice:

*"The heavens rest upon justice"*30

and the Prophets' Missions aimed at establishment of justice by people:

"Indeed We sent Our Messengers with clear proofs and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance [justice] that people may maintain justice,")31.

In modern societies, realization of justice requires abiding by the laws and injustice is synonymous with evading or delaying the law. Now the question arises as to which law? The law legislated by people like us? The law which is subject to alteration each and every day? The law in which people's interests lie? What arises from unmeasured thought, limited knowledge, and alteration?

What is subject to threats, enticement, and passions? What is legislated by those who delay laws and fail to act upon the same? Could such laws enjoy sanctity and credibility and provide the society with justice and security?

The point is that Divine laws may solely establish peace and justice in society and stay away from defects and flaws. Such laws are legislated by the Creator of man based upon infinite Grace and Omniscience and its Legislator is the first One Who has acted upon the same.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 10

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

10. The believers are nothing else than brethren. So make reconciliation amongst your brethren [in case contention and conflict arise] and fear Allah that you may receive Mercy.

The blessed Verse in question treats of the relationship amongst believers like that between brothers. The similitude demonstrates a number of points including:

1. The friendship between two brothers is deeply rooted and firm.

2. The friendship between two brothers is bilateral rather than unilateral.

3. Such friendship is based on innate nature and disposition rather than on worldly and mundane appeals.

4. Two brothers are unanimous before strangers and support each other.

5. The two brothers descend from common progenitors.

It is narrated in traditions that two brethren are likened to two hands washing each other.32 The verbal form aslihu is attested three times in the preceding Verse and the one in question which indicates that the Islamic faith attends to the establishment of peace and reconciliation amongst individuals in society.

At any rate, the blessed Verse in question s lays emphasis upon reconciliation inter se (dhat al-bayn) whose reason is thus expressed:

"The believers are nothing else than brethren."

The blessed Verse is saying that inasmuch as you strive to reconcile two brothers, it is also incumbent upon you to make peace seriously and decisively amongst conflicting believers. What a meaningful and interesting expression. All believers are like brethren and contentions and conflicts running amongst brethren are to be replaced by peace and sincerity.

Since preferential treatment at times replaces precepts, the blessed Verse warns once more and thus closes:

"fear Allah that you may receive Mercy."

Thus, one of the most significant social responsibilities of Muslims against one another in administration of justice is clarified with all its dimensions.

It is also worthy of note that the clause:

“The believers are nothing else than brethren”

is one of the fundamental and deeply rooted Islamic slogans, a very remarkable, profound, effective, and meaningful slogans.

When others intend to demonstrate their love for their co-religionists, they make mention of them as comrades; however, the Islamic faith has elevated the friendship amongst Muslims to such an extent that mention is made of the relationship between two human beings based upon equity by the love between two brothers.

Based upon this significant Islamic principle, Muslims from any race and tribe speaking any language and at any age range feel profound brotherly love amongst themselves, even if they live in different parts of the world.

Such love, relationship, and accord are quite intelligible in pilgrimage to Mecca in which Muslims from all parts of the world congregate at the focal point of monotheism and display the objective realization of this significant Islamic law.

In other words, the Islamic faith regards all Muslims as members of the same family and addresses them as brothers and sisters. They are brethren and sisters both in words and slogans and also in practice and mutual obligations.

Islamic traditions lay considerable emphasis on the issue, particularly on its practical aspects. Mention will be herein made of a number of meaningful traditions narrated in this respect:

According to a Prophetic tradition

“Muslims are brethren, they never do wrong to each other, they never forgo supporting each other, they never abandon their brethren in hardships.”

Imam Sadiq (as) says:

*“Muslims are brethren and serves as each other’s eye and guide. They never betray each other. They never do wrong to each other. They never deceive each other. They never break their promises.”*33

Islamic sources abound in traditions concerning the claims of believers before his Muslim brethren, the kinds of such rights, the merits of visiting believing brethren, shaking hands with, embracing, remembering, and gladdening them and particularly meeting their demands and making efforts in this respect and also alleviating their sorrows, providing them with food and clothes, and respecting them; such claims have been dealt with in different chapters of Usul Kafi.

A Prophetic tradition regarding thirty claims of believers before their believing brethren which is one of

the most comprehensive traditions in this respect will be narrated hereunder to crown the discussion.

The Noble Prophet (S) said:

"Muslims enjoy thirty claims before his Muslim brethren whose absence may not be cleared unless he acts upon them or his Muslim brethren waive their rights:

1. Forgive their faults.

2. Be kind to them in afflictions.

3. Keep their secrets.

4. Make good for their errors and mistakes.

5. Accept their apologies.

6. Defend them against slanderers.

7. Be benevolent toward them.

8. Watch over their friendship.

9. Be steadfast against their pacts.

10. Visit them in their ailments.

11. Attend their funeral processions.

12. Answer their calls.

13. Accept their gifts.

14. Return their favors.

15. Be grateful for their bounties.

16. Make efforts to render them aid and support.

17. Preserve their dignity and honor.

18. Meet their demands.

19. Intercede on their behalf.

20. Say Gesundheit when they sneeze.

21. Help them find what they have lost.

22. Return their greetings.

23. Cherish their words.

24. Be benevolent toward their bounties.

25. Acknowledge their oaths.

26. Regard their friends as his own friends.

27. Refrain from enmity against them.

28. Render them aid and support whether they be wrong-doers or wronged such that keep them from doing wrong and help them to reclaim their rights when they are wronged.

29. Stand by them in afflictions and refrain from belittling them.

30. Expect them to have whatever good he favors and disfavor for them whatever he disfavors."[34]

At any rate, one of the claims of Muslims before each other is rendering each other aid and support and reconciliation inter se (islah dhat al-bayn) as mentioned in the foregoing Qur'anic Verses and traditions.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 11

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَومٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَى أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاء مِّن نِّسَاء عَسَى أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الاِسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

11. O you who believe! Let not a group derides another. It may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor let women deride other women. It may be that the latter are better than the former. Neither defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames [***since***] ***doing wrong after having faith is an evil practice*** [***unbefitting you***]. ***And whosoever does not repent*** [***of committing such deeds***]***, then they are indeed wrong-doers.***

The preceding Verse treated of the question of brotherhood amongst believers and the blessed Verse in question deals with the causes leading to its obliteration. Likewise, the preceding Verses discussed peace and reconciliation, but the blessed Verse in question makes a reference to a number of factors and roots of contention and conflict including deriding, belittling, and slandering.

Merits springing from acting upon Islamic injunctions include providing a healthy environment and impeding social conflicts. It may be said that deriding and belittling as mentioned in the blessed Verse in question serve as instances of such vices, but it should be borne in mind that uttering any word or

committing any act that distorts Muslim brotherhood is forbidden.

Thus, addressed to believers, the blessed Verse in question is saying that you who believe should abstain from deriding your believing brethren. You are unaware of their hearts and acts. Those who have subject to your derision may be better than you. Believing women are strictly forbidden from deriding other women and casting sarcastic remarks upon them, since they are unaware of their excellence over them.

The blessed Verse provides believers with guidance and admonition to the effect that whenever they intend to deride someone, expose his faults, insult or reproach him or entertain evil thought about him, they are supposed to consider their own deeds, since

"man is aware of his self"

and if he contemplates about his own disposition and deeds he will perceive that even if he happens to be devoid of vices, such derision of believers is one of the most reprehensible demerits and thereby he may take measures toward improving his self and restrains himself from insulting others and finding faults with them.

Qur'anic exegets' views regarding the occasion of revelation of the blessed Verse in question. A group of Banu Tamim derided some the Companions of the Noble Prophet (S), including 'Ammar, Khabbab, Balal, Salman, Suhayb, and Abu Darda'; as a consequence of which the blessed Verse in question was revealed forbidding them to deride believers saying that they are outwardly poor, but inwardly they may be better than deriders.

According to Ibn 'Abbas' Tafsir[35], the blessed Verse was revealed regarding two wives of the Noble Prophet (S) who had derided another wife of his, Umm Salama thereby God Almighty impeded them from such reprehensible deed;

(***"Nor let women deride other women"***).

As it was recurrently mentioned above, the blessed Verse in question is not specific, in other words, it imparts a general rule forbidding believers not to commit such evil deed and the rule is applicable to those present at the time of revelation and also to those from the following generations.

The blessed Verse proceeds by saying:

"Neither defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames [***since***] ***doing wrong after having faith is an evil practice*** [***unbefitting you***]***."***

The Arabic word lamz indicates backbiting and finding faults with others and some have said that it denotes making mention of someone's fault before him. It is said that hamz denotes backbiting and lamz is to expose someone's faults through facial expressions. It is also said that hamz solely denotes

expressing someone's faults.

The Qur'anic Chapter 104 opens with:

"Woe to every slanderer and backbiter."

The blessed Verse forbids believers to find faults with one another. The pronoun 'one another' (anfusakum) may indicate that since believers are regarded as one single soul (nafs wahida), if they find faults with others through uttering words and facial expressions, they expose their own faults.

In other words,

"Believers are like one single soul" (***al-mu'minun ka-'l-nafs wahida***)

connotes that they are like one person since they are unanimous in faith and beneficence.

The negative imperative:

"nor insult one another"

(la tanabizu) is cognate with nabaz ("nickname"). The blessed Verse is saying that believers are not supposed to call each other by adversive nicknames; in like manner one who did some evil deed and thereby earned the an abusive nickname but afterwards repented committing the same is not supposed to be called by the same nickname.

The contextual meaning of the blessed Verse indicates that by 'nickname,' abusive nickname is being intended since the clause:

"[***It***] ***is an evil practice*** [***unbefitting you***]*"*

follows the same connoting that faith is like unto pure water absolving all dirt and filth. Therefore, it is forbidden to call someone by abusive nicknames following his conversion to faith.

"Those who repent not are wrong-doers."

One who hurts believers through facial expressions and exposes the faults of others is regarded amongst evil-doers and if he fails to repent, he is regarded amongst wrong-doers.

Finally, deriding others is apparently one sin, but it actually consists of a number of sins: belittling, humiliating, exposing faults, causing discord, backbiting, rancor, contention, intrigue, and casting sarcastic remarks upon others.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 12

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

12. O you who believe! Avoid much suspicion. Indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not [on others], neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? By no means, [since] you would hate it. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, Most Merciful.

Resuming the discussion raised in the preceding Verse, the blessed Verse in question treats of factors perturbing the peace and brotherhood amongst believers among which mention may be made of suspicion, prying, and backbiting. It is worthy of note that the Holy Qur'an recommends believers to entertain good intentions toward others and refrain from entertaining suspicion about others.

The Arabic word ghayba designates talking behind someone's back without people being aware of the same and it happens to be offensive to the person being backbitten.

The blessed Verse in question opens with:

"O you who believe! Avoid much suspicion. Indeed some suspicions are sins."

The word suspicion (dann) ad hoc refers to bad opinions exceed good ones amongst people, hence reference to them by 'much' (kathir); whereas forming good opinions about others is good rather than bad.

It is worthy of note that forming many suspicions is forbidden, but the blessed Verse is expounding that 'certain' suspicions are sins; the reason behind the same might be the fact that certain bad opinions are true hence the expression;

"Indeed some suspicions are sins."

Thus, committing such sin suffices to make man refrain from all such instances.

A question arises here as to forbidding involuntary good and bad opinions formed in mind consequent to a series of preliminary assumptions beyond human volition reflected in mind. Such forbidding applies to the sequence of acts; in other words, when one entertains a bad opinion about a Muslim in his mind, he is not supposed to pay the least attention to it in practice, nor should he make any alterations in his attitude and relations with him.

Thus, acting upon the bad opinion or suspicion is considered as a sin. Consequently, it is narrated from

the Noble Prophet (S) that three things are unpleasant in Muslims and there exists a way out of them one of which being suspicion whose way out is to desist from acting upon it.[36] Man may contemplate different issues and thereby abstain from forming bad opinions about others.

Thus, he may reflect upon true alternatives and possibilities concerning the same and overcome forming bad opinions in time. Therefore, forming bad opinions is not at all times beyond human will. According to traditions, one has to form the best possible opinion concerning the deeds committed by his brethren unless the opposite be substantiated.

One is not supposed to form bad opinions regarding the words uttered by his Muslim brethren so long as one may find a favorable justification for the same.

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"Interpret the deeds of your brother in the best possible manner such that what he does pleases you. Do not form bad opinions about the words uttered by your brother as far as you may find good justification in them?"

At any rate, the Islamic injunction is question is one of the most comprehensive and well-measured injunctions in the domain of social relations perfectly guaranteeing security in society. In other words, taking into account all aspects of the issue, the Islamic faith aims at the security of people in their personal lives. It is evident that if anyone is allowed to pry into other people's affairs, he may bring disgrace to them and all individuals of the society will live in hell.

It is needless to say that such injunction is by no means inconsistent with the activities carried out by the intelligence systems of the Islamic government against conspiracies, assassinations, bloodshed, and arson.

According to the third and the last injunction which is the consequent of the twain preceding injunctions, the blessed Verse in question reads:

"And spy not [on others], neither backbite one another."

Therefore, forming bad opinions leads to prying and exposing the defects and secrets of others and such knowledge results in backbiting whose causes and effects are all forbidden in Islam.

The blessed Verse in question thus clearly depicts the evil resulting from such act:

"Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?"

The blessed Verse further adds:

"By no means, [since] you would hate it."

The honor of a Muslim brother is likened to the flesh of his dead body and putting him into disgrace leads to backbiting and exposing secrets is similar to consumption of his flesh. Making mention of ‘dead body’ is owing to the fact that backbiting is done behind people’s back in the same manner that the dead are unable to defend themselves.

Such evil act is the most dishonorable wrong which may be done by one human against his own brother. The similitude expresses the extraordinary unpleasantness of the act of backbiting and its entailing sin.

As it will be mentioned hereunder, backbiting receives significant treatment in Islamic traditions and few sins are on a par with it, since it sows rancor and enmity in hearts and at times entails bloody conflicts, murder, and massacre.

Since there may exists sinners having committed these three sins and intend to compensate for their sins upon hearing these blessed Verses, the Verse in question further adds:

“And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, Most Merciful.”

The point is that the spirit of fearing God Almighty is to be invigorated and then the sinner is supposed to repent from having committed sins so that Divine Mercy and Favor may embrace him.

Like many repugnant qualities, backbiting in time turns into mental disorder such that backbiters derive pleasure from their blameworthy acts and find satisfaction in disgracing others. It constitutes a quite perilous repugnant attribute. Thus, one may absolve his soul of such impurities through improving one’s self and reflecting upon the evil consequences springing from them and thereby one may refrain from committing the sin of backbiting.

Then, one may repent and since backbiting entails trampling human right (haqq al-nas), it is incumbent upon him to offer him his apologies even in terse expressions, like, owing to ignorance, he slandered him behind his back and demands forgiveness.

It should be born in mind, however, that one has to desist from offering apologies if he finds out that it may lead to further problems and adverse consequences. In case the victim of backbiting is not available or he is not known or he has deceased, the sinner is supposed to ask forgiveness for him and embark upon doing righteous good deeds so that God Almighty may forgive him and gain the satisfaction of the victim.

Finally, like any other injunction, that of backbiting has certain exceptions. It may be committed for consultation; for instance it may aim at choosing a spouse, business partner, and colleague.

Confidentiality in providing consultation is a certain Islamic precept necessitating that the defects of the person are to be expressed, lest a Muslim may be ensnared and talking behind someone’s back for this purpose does not involve committing unlawful acts. The same rule applies when significant goals are involved instances of which include like those of consultation or reclaiming the rights and wrongs.

One who openly commits sins and is notorious for debauchery (mutajahir bi–'l fisq) is an exception to the rule and mentioning his sins behind his back does not involve committing sins, though it should be borne in mind that such rule solely applies to those who are notorious for debauchery. For other instances, one should consult the relevant chapters in hadith sources.

It is also worthy of note that besides committing the sin of backbiting, listening to the same or attending sessions in which people are being slandered behind their back are also unlawful. According to a number of traditions, it is incumbent upon Muslims to reject backbiting, i.e. they are supposed to defend the honor of their Muslim brother.

It would be so pleasant to live in a society in which such moral precepts are precisely acted upon. In this respect, a number of traditions will be cited hereunder.

The Noble Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"Three persons will not be admitted to Paradise: reminder of past favors done to others, slanderer talking behind other people's back, drinker of alcoholic beverages."[37]

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

"Abstaining from backbiting is dearer to God Almighty than establishing ten thousand units of recommendable prayers."[38]

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

"The expiation for the victim of backbiting is to ask God Almighty to forgive him."[39]

It is narrated on the authority of Abu 'Abd Allah [Imam Sadiq] (as) from the Messenger of God (S):

"Whoever believes in God Almighty and the Day of Judgment is not supposed to attend a session in which a certain Imam or leader is slandered or a Muslim is the victim of backbiting."[40]

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"One who listens to backbiting is a culprit of the backbiter."[41]

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"Backbiting, slandering, and telling lies lead to torment of the grave."[42]

It is narrated from Ja'far ibn Muhammad [Imam Sadiq] (as):

"Paradise is ordained to one who abstains from backbiting, anger, and envy."[43]

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

*“Abstain from envy, anger, and backbiting and maintain brotherhood O God’s servants.”*44

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

*“It is unlawful for Muslims to backbite. Verily, in the like manner that fire consumes firewood, backbiting consumes good deeds and qualities.”*45

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

*“Leave the deceased alone and abstain from reiterating their vices. Talk about the good qualities of the deceased.”*46

Imam Ridha (as) narrates from Imam Sajjad that whoever refrains from disgracing Muslims, God Almighty will ignore his faults.47

According to traditions, one who pries into his brethren’s faults [and talks about the same with others] God Almighty will expose his vices.48

According to a tradition, sitting at a mosque waiting for congregation prayer so long as it does not involve backbiting is regarded as worship of God Almighty.49

In his last sermon in Medina, the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) said:

“Backbiting invalidates fasting.”

In other words, one who backbites is deprived of the spiritual and religious merits of the fasting.50

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 13

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

13. O people! We have created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most honorable of you with Allah is that [***one***] ***who fears Allah. Indeed, Allah is Omniscient, All-Aware.***

The Islamic faith rejects all racial, political, ethnological, tribal, geographical, economic, intellectual, cultural, social, and military segregations and places fear of God as the standard for distinction between virtues and vice;

(***“Indeed, the most honorable of you with Allah is that*** [***one***] ***who fears Allah”***).

The preceding Verses were addressed to believers by the phrase:

“O people!”

It is worthy of note that numerous Qur’anic Verses deal with factors leading ‘believing community’ to perils and forbids people from the same. The blessed Verse in question addresses the members of the human society and thus expresses the most significant principle guaranteeing discipline and stability and the true standard of human values against false values.

The blessed Verse is saying:

“O people! We have created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another.”

‘Creation of mankind from a male and a female’

indicates tracing the genealogy of mankind to Adam and Eve. Therefore, all mankind spring from the same root and taking pride in terms of genealogy and tribe is meaningless.

God Almighty created different characteristics for tribes for the maintenance of social order, since such different characteristics indentify men without which identification of people and thereby maintenance of social order in human society may not be established and chaos would encompass human society.

Following an invalidation of taking pride in ancestors and tribes predominant as the most significant source of honor and pride in the age of ignorance, the Glorious Qur’an treats of the rue standard of values by saying:

“Indeed, the most honorable of you with Allah is that [*one*] ***who fears Allah.”***

Thus, all outward and material privileges are invalidated and the true standard of values is determined by fear of God saying that it is solely through fear of God that one may attain to closeness to God Almighty and the threshold of his sanctity. Fear of God is a spiritual and inward quality whose permanence in the heart and soul should precede any other quality. Besides, many people pretend to have the quality in question but only few people possess the same.

Thus the blessed Verse in question closes:

“Indeed, Allah is Omniscient, All-Aware.”

He knows the righteous quite well and is fully aware of the degree of their fear of God, sincerity of intention and purity of heart.

He endears them based upon His Omniscience and bestows rewards upon them. He also knows pretenders and chastises them.

What follows constitutes a brief discussion on fear of God Almighty. As mentioned above, the Holy

Qur'an recognizes fear of God as the highest privilege and acknowledges that it is the only standard for assaying human values.

Fear of God is elsewhere[51] regarded by the Holy Qur'an as the best provision:

"And take a provision [*with you*] *for the journey, but the best provision is Fear of God* (*taqwa*)*."*

Fear of God Almighty is elsewhere regarded as:

"the best garment"[52].

Numerous Qur'anic Verses consider the first principle of the Prophetic Call as fear of God and the significance of fear of God Almighty is so exalted that:

"He [*Allah*] *is the One, deserving that mankind should stand in awe before Him and He is the One Who forgives* [*mankind*]*"*[53].

Fear of God is reflected in the Holy Qur'an as Divine Light creating knowledge wherever it takes roots:

(*"Be afraid of Allah and He teaches you,"*)[54].

Doing righteous good deeds are considered to be on a par with fear of God;

(*"Render one another help in doing righteous good deeds and fear of God Almighty"*).

Besides, justice is regarded on a par with fear of God Almighty;

(*"Be just and it is closer to fear of God"*).

Now, let us attend to the truth of fear of God as the great spiritual capital and the most exalted of honors with so many privileges. The Holy Qur'an makes certain allusions and thereby reveals the truth of fear of God Almighty.

According to numerous Qur'anic Verses, the place of fear of God Almighty is human heart, for instance:

"Indeed, those who lower their voices in the presence of Allah's Messenger (*for the sake of good manners and their respect for him*)*, they are the ones whose hearts Allah has tested* [*and prepared*] *for* [*entertaining*] *piety. For them are forgiveness and a great reward"*[55].

According to the Holy Qur'an, taqwa ("fear of God Almighty") is the antonym of fujur ("immorality, iniquity, depravation, dissolution, debauchery, licentiousness, profligacy, dissolute life")

(*"Then He showed him what is debauchery for him and what is fear of God for him,"*)[56].

Whatever springs from the spirit of sincerity, faith, and pure intention is regarded as a quality based on

fear of God Almighty, as in the case of the Mosque of Quba opposite which the Mosque of Âirar was built by hypocrites, the Holy Qur'an says:

"Indeed the mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on fear of God is more worthy that you stand therein,")57*.*

The aforesaid Qur'anic Verses clearly indicate that fear of God is the same feeling of obligation and duty which follows the penetration of faith in heart, predominating his existence, impeding him from committing impiety and sin, calls him to good, purity, and justice, and purifying his thought and intention from impurities.

Taking a glance at the etymology of the Arabic word taqwa, we come to the same conclusion, since the root w–q–y denotes "striving toward preserving something." The word ad hoc connotes preserving the soul from any impurity and concentrating one's faculties in carrying out deeds in which Divine Satisfaction lies.

A number of eminent personalities consider three stages for fear of God Almighty:

1. Preservation of soul from everlasting torment through attaining to true beliefs.

2. Abstaining from committing any sin including abandonment of carrying out obligations and committing sins.

3. Restraining one's self from entanglement in what preoccupies the mind and keeps man from remembrance of God Almighty. This is the most exalted kind of fear of God Almighty.58

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) expresses clear and graphic depictions and expressions regarding fear of God Almighty in which he contrasts fear of God with sins and impurities:

*"Know that sins are like wild mounts used by sinners whose reins are torn asunder thus casting sinners into the depth of Hell; whereas, fear of God Almighty is like a tamed and calm mount whose riders take their reins in their hands and gallop toward the heart of Paradise."*59

Based on this delicate depiction, fear of God is restraining and checking one's self and overcoming one's concupiscence against wild desires and leaving them unchecked.

Imam 'Ali (as) also says elsewhere:

*"Know O servants of Allah that fear of God Almighty is like a fortified and invincible castle, but impiety and sin are like a weak and indefensible wall which may not save those seeking refuge in it, nor may any one find security in it. Know that many may solely stay unharmed by sins through fear of God Almighty."*60

He says elsewhere:

"Grasp fear of God Almighty which is a strong cord and hold and a secure refuge."[61]

The truth and the spirit of fear of God Almighty are revealed from these depictions and expressions. It is also worthy of note that fear of God Almighty is the fruit of the tree of faith. Consequently, one has to fortify the pillars of faith in order to attain to such great reward.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 14

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُل لَّمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِن قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَإِن تُطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلِتْكُم مِّنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

14. The Bedouin Arabs say: "We believe." Say: "You believe not but you only say: 'We have submitted [to the Will of Allah],' for faith has not yet penetrated your hearts. But if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not decrease an iota in reward for your deeds. Indeed, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

The Arabic word a'rab ad hoc connotes those Bedouin Arabs some of whom were believers and they were cherished elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[62]:

"And of the Bedouin Arabs there are some who believe in Allah and the Last Day."

Nonetheless, some of who attached more importance to themselves than they deserved despite the fact that they were newly converted to the Islamic faith.

At times the incentive behind conversion to the Islamic faith is attaining or preserving mundane possessions, but that of faith is certainly spiritual. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"Pure blood is preserved through conversion to the Islamic faith and marrying Muslims becomes lawful as well, but the reward in the Hereafter will be bestowed based on heart-felt faith."[63]

A number of Qur'anic exegets make mention of an occasion of revelation for the blessed Verse in question whose summary will be mentioned herein.

Some people from the tribe of Banu Asad entered Median in one of the years of famine and aspiring to receive aid from the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) they uttered the formula:

"There is no god but Allah and Muhammad (S) is the Messenger of Allah"

and thus addressed the Noble Prophet (S):

"Mounting Arab tribes waged war against you but we have come to you with our families without engaging in fight with you"

and thus they intended to remind the Noble Prophet (S) of their so-called favor.

It was on this occasion that the blessed in question and the following Verses were revealed reminding them that they have nominally converted to the Islamic faith and faith has not penetrated into their hears. Besides, even if they converted to Islam, they should not remind the Noble Prophet (S) of their so-called favors but God Almighty reminds them of His Guidance bestowed upon them.64

The preceding Verse treated of the standard of the values of humanity, namely fear of God Almighty.

Since fear of God Almighty is the fruit of the tree of faith, the faith penetrating the depth of heart, the blessed Verse in question deals with the truth of faith, saying:

"The Bedouin Arabs say: 'We believe.' Say: 'You believe not but you only say: 'We have submitted [to the Will of Allah],' for faith has not yet penetrated your hearts.'"

The blessed Verse reflects the difference between Islam and faith, saying that Islam is the outward and legal aspect of faith and whoever utters the formula:

"There is no god but Allah and Muhammad (S) is the Messenger of Allah"

is recognized as a Muslim and is thus obliged to act upon Islamic laws; but faith is a real and inward affair whose place is human heart rather than his tongue and appearance. There might be different incentives, even personal and materials ones, behind Islam but those of faith are necessarily spiritual springing from knowledge and awareness. Such faith is like a tree bearing on whose branches the rejuvenating fruit of fear of God Almighty.

The same theme is clearly expressed by the Noble Prophet of Islam (S):

*"Islam is something evident, but faith resides in heart."*65

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

*"It is through Islam that the [purity] of blood is preserved, one's trust is guaranteed, and marrying him or her will be lawful, but Divine Rewards will be bestowed upon man through his faith."*66

It is in the same vein that according to some traditions, the meaning of Islam is solely restricted to verbal proclamation whereas faith is mentioned as proclamation together with practice.67The same theme is to be found in a different expression in the chapter on "Islam and Faith."

Fudhayl ibn Sayyar narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

*"Faith accompanies Islam but the opposite is not true [in other words, every believer is a Muslim but every Muslim is not a believer]. Faith resides in heart but Islam is something thereby people act upon the laws of marriage, inheritance, and preservation of blood."*68

The conceptual difference reveals when the twain words are juxtaposed unless the words Islam and faith are applied to the same referent.

The blessed Verse further adds:

"But if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not decrease an iota in reward for your deeds. Indeed, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

The Arabic clause la yaltakum

(***"He will not decrease an iota in reward"***)

derives from l-y-t denoting "decrease what is due. The aforesaid clauses actually make a reference to the Qur'anic principle as per which deeds shall be accepted if they are carried out through faith.

The blessed Verse is saying that the token of obedience to Allah's and His Messenger's Commands lies in faith them from the bottom of one's heart and it is solely in this case that your deeds will be of any significance and God Almighty will accept and reward the least of your righteous good deeds and it is through the same faith that He will forgive your sins since He is Oft-Forgiving and Most Merciful.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 15

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

15. Believers are only those who have believed in Allah and His Messenger (***S***) ***and then doubt not but strive with their possessions and their lives for the Cause of Allah. They are the truthful*** [***in their claims to faith***]***.***

Having faith in the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) is supposed to accompany that in God Almighty;

(***"Believe in Allah and His Messenger*** [***SAW***]***"***)***.***

Faith is something inward that may be recognized through practice and without struggling in the Cause of Allah is nothing more than empty words.

The token of true faith is perseverance and doubtlessness regarding the same;

(***"And then doubt not but strive with their possessions and their lives for the Cause of Allah"***)***.***

Since attainment to such inward affair, namely faith, is not so facile, the blessed Verse treats of its tokens distinguishing believers from Muslims, the sincere from the lying, and those who enthusiastically answered to the Noble Prophet's (S) Call from those who pretended belief in order to achieve worldly possessions, saying that true believers are solely those who believe in God Almighty and His Messenger

(S) and entertain no doubt but struggle with their lives and possessions in the Cause of Allah.

The first token of faith is doubtlessness in proceeding on the Path of the Islamic faith. The second token is to struggle in Allah’s Cause with one’s possessions. The third token which is the most exalted is to struggle with one’s life.

Thus, Islam makes mention of the most obvious tokens: perseverance and doubtlessness on the one hand and sacrificing one’s possessions and life on the other. How may faith be deeply rooted in heart when man does not sacrifice his possessions and life in the Cause of the Beloved?

Thus the blessed Verse closes:

“They are the truthful [***in their claims to faith***]***.”***

They are truthful believers in whose hearts the spirit of faith flows.

The standard put forth by the Holy Qur’an for distinguishing between

“truthful believers”

and

“liars pretending belief in the Islamic faith”

is not restricted to the tribe of Banu Asad, but it is a clear criterion for all times thereby a distinction may be made between true believers from pretenders.

The criterion may also serve to reveal the value of those who pretend belief in the Islamic faith anywhere and claim the Noble Prophet’s (S) indebtedness to them but in practice they do not reflect the least token of their faith and belief in Islam.

Au contraire, there are people who not only claim nothing but also regard themselves at fault and at the same time stand foremost in the arena of self sacrifice. If we apply this Qur’anic criterion in assaying true believers, the number of pretenders to belief in the Islamic faith far exceeds that of true believers.

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 16

قُلْ أَتُعَلِّمُونَ اللَّهَ بِدِينِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

16. Say: “Will you inform Allah of your religion while Allah knows all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth; and Allah is All-Aware of everything.

A number of people taking the oath said unto the Noble Prophet (S) that they were sincere in their belief

in Allah and his Prophethood. Consequently, the blessed Verse in question was revealed saying that there was no need to take the oath since Allah is All-Aware of everything.

Presenting one's beliefs to Allah's saints is quite fine in case it serves to assay, improve, and/or attainment to certitude as Hadhrat 'Abd al-'Adim Hasani (as) presented his beliefs to Imam Hadi (as);69 otherwise hypocritical presentation of beliefs is reprehensible.

Addressing the Noble Prophet (S) the blessed Verse is saying:

"O Muhammad (S)! Say unto those who utter the formula 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad (S) is the Messenger of Allah': Do you intend to inform me that you have converted to the Islamic faith? God Almighty is All-Aware of what is concealed in the heavens and in the earth. He is Omniscient of everything and your inward and outward. If your belief is out of hypocrisy, He is All-Aware of it and He is All-Aware of your intentions."

Surah al-Hujurat - Verse 17-18

يَمُنُّونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُل لَا تَمُنُّوا عَلَيَّ إِسلامَكُم بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَاكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

17. They regard as a favor to you that they have converted to Islam. Say: "Count not your Islam as a favor to me. Nay, but Allah has conferred a favor upon you that He has guided you to the faith if you indeed are truthful.
18. Truly, Allah knows the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. And Allah is the All-Seer of what you do.

Being guided to the Islamic faith and embracing it are great Divine Favors conferred upon man, since God Almighty is needless of his belief, faith, and worship;

(*"Count not your Islam as a favor to me. Nay, but Allah has conferred a favor upon you that He has guided you to the faith if you indeed are truthful"*).

At any rate, the tribe of Banu Asad counted their conversion to the Islamic faith as a favor to the Noble Prophet (S) saying that they had come to him with their families without waging war against him and had converted to the Islamic faith as a consequence of which they regarded themselves worthy of being rewarded imagining that they render a service to the Noble Prophet (S) through their conversion and requested him to return their favor.

Thus, the blessed Verses in question was revealed to refute their false belief so that no one may

presume that conversion to the Islamic faith or doing righteous good deeds requires God Almighty and His Messenger (S) to return their favor through conferring rewards upon him. Nonetheless, God confers a Favor upon those who believe, since being guided and any righteous good deed are dependent upon Divine Favor.

The blessed Verse 17 reflects that no one deserves Reward in return for his belief or for his righteous good deeds. The Rewards promised to believers are through Divine Favor rather than owing to worthiness since God Almighty confers whatever He wills to whoever He wants.

The blessed Verse 18 is saying that God Almighty is certainly All-Aware of what is concealed from sense perception in the heavens and the earth. The blessed Verse disapproves the claims of those who making attempts at dissimulating their inward wickedness pretend belief without faith having penetrated their hearts and count themselves amongst believers.

Such people should know that the truth is other than what they imagine since God Almighty and His Messenger (S) are fully aware of their secret intentions.

1. 21:27
2. Tafsir Qurtubi, vol. 9, p. 6121; Majma' al-Bayan; Burhan, under the blessed Verse in question.
3. 24:62
4. Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 9, p. 130.
5. 24:30
6. Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani, apud Ibn Sa'd's Tabaqat.
7. 24:63
8. 27:12
9. 9:67
10. 5:24-26
11. 5:47
12. 7:163
13. 7:165
14. 9:23
15. 29:34
16. 5:3
17. 24:4
18. 4:83
19. 33:60
20. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 2, p. 225.
21. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 2, p. 250.
22. Ibid.
23. Kafi, vol. 2, p. 126.
24. Ibid, vol. 1, p. 426.
25. 11:97
26. Wasa'il, vol. 12, p. 212.
27. Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 9, p. 132.
28. Tafsir Qurtubi, vol. 9, p. 6136.
29. Tafsir al-Mizan, vol. 18, p. 342.

30. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 33, p. 493.
31. 57:25
32. Mahajjat al-Baydha', vol. 3, p. 319.
33. Usul Kafi, vol. 2.
34. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 74, p. 236.
35. "Commentary," p. 323
36. Mahajjat al-Baydha', vol. 5, p. 269.
37. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 72, p. 260.
38. Ibid, p. 261.
39. Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 10, p. 432.
40. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 72, p. 246; Safina, vol. 2, p. 337.
41. Ibn Warram's Majmu'a ("[Hadith] Compendium"), p. 84.
42. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 72, p. 259.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibn Warram's Majmu'a ("[Hadith] Compendium"), p. 81.
45. Mahajjat al-Baydha', vol. 5, p. 255.
46. Nahj al-Fasaha, tradition no. 264.
47. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 72, p. 256.
48. Abu Da'ud's Sunan, apud Mahajjat al-Baydha', vol. 5, p. 252
49. Kafi, vol. 2, p. 357.
50. Mahajjat al-Baydha', vol. 5, p. 254.
51. 2:197
52. 7:26
53. 74:56
54. 2:282
55. 49:3
56. 91:8
57. 9:108
58. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 70, p. 136.
59. Nahj al-Balagha, sermon 16.
60. Ibid, sermon 157.
61. Ibid, sermon 19.
62. 9:99
63. Kafi, vol. 2, p. 24.
64. Tafsir al-Mizan; Ruh al-Bayan; Fi Thialal al-Qur'an, under the blessed Verses in question.
65. Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 9, p. 138.
66. Kafi, vol. 2, traditions 1 and 2, Bab Inna al-Islam Yuhaqqiqu bi-hi al-Damm.
67. Ibid.
68. Usul Kafi, vol. 2, tradition 3.
69. Tafsir Nur, vol. 11, p. 198.

Surah Qaf, Chapter 50, Verses 1 – 26

(Qaf)

Section (juz' 26)

Number of Verses: 45

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The Chapter has forty four Verses and it was revealed in Mecca. The title of the Chapter derives from the opening detached letter qaf. Similar to other Meccan Chapters, the Chapter in question treats of resurrection and an exposition of the destinies of former nations as well as those of the good and the vicious.

The Chapter opens with the opponents' denial of resurrection and proceeds with making mention of the examples of resurrection in nature and creation.

Merits of Recitation of the Chapter

According to Islamic traditions, the Noble Prophet (S) accorded great significance to the Chapter in question such that he recited it every Friday at the sermon of the congregation prayer.[1]

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

"Whoever recites the Chapter Qaf, Allah shall alleviate the difficulties and throes of death for him."[2]

According to a tradition narrated from Imam Baqir (as):

"One who recites the Chapter Qaf in obligatory and supererogatory prayers at all times, Allah shall increase his means of subsistence, shall give him the letter of his deeds to his right hand, and shall make facilitate his account on the Day of Judgment."[3]

It is worthy of note that so many glories and merits may not be accrued through mere recitation of the words, but it may open a path toward awakening of thought as a means of doing righteous good deeds consistent with the contextual meaning of the Chapter.

Surah Qaf - Verses 1-2

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

ق وَالْقُرْآنِ الْمَجِيدِ

بَلْ عَجِبُوا أَن جَاءهُمْ مُنذِرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا شَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ

1. Qaf. By the Glorious Qur'an [***your Prophethood and Resurrection are true***]***.***
2. Nay, they wonder that there has come to them a warner from amongst themselves. Therefore, the disbelievers said [***regarding the news of Resurrection***]***: "This is a strange thing!***

Taking an oath to the Holy Qur'an is of significance, since it is Glorious. Thus, if you seek glory, turn to the Glorious Qur'an. A number of Qur'anic Chapters open with detached letters and the Chapter in question opens with the detached letter Qaf.

As mentioned above, of one the significant interpretations for detached letters is that the Most Glorious Qur'an consists of letters of alphabet reflecting the truth that God Almighty Who revealed the Holy Qur'an is Omnipotent and Omniscient such that He created such exquisite system out of such simple means. However, there are other interpretations for detached letters regarding which one may refer to the openings of Chapters 2, 3, 7, and HM Chapters.

Some Qur'anic exegets maintain that Qaf alludes to a number of Allah's Most Beauteous Names, e.g. the Omnipotent (Qadir) and the Self-Existing (Qayyum).

From amongst the evidence alluding to the point that the detached letter indicates the Glory of the Holy Qur'an is that an oath is taken to the Glorious Qur'an immediately following the letter:

"Qaf. By the Glorious Qur'an."

The Arabic word majid ("glorious, illustrious, exalted") derives from m-j-d ("to be glorious, illustrious, exalted"). The titled majid is applied to the Holy Qur'an since it possesses glory without bounds and it wholly deserves the title in terms of contents, beauteous form, exquisite Injunctions, and invigorating and didactic plans.

Numerous possibilities have occurred to Qur'anic exegets as to mentioning the oath and its object. Taking into account the following Qur'anic Verses, it seems that the object is the question of the Noble Prophet's (S) Prophethood or Resurrection.

Taking an oath in the following Verse;

(***"Nay, they wonder that there has come to them a warner from amongst themselves. Therefore, the disbelievers said*** [***regarding the news of Resurrection***]***: 'This is a strange thing!'"***)

may reflect disbelievers' wonder as to the Noble Prophet's (S) chiefship and leadership as someone who

was raised amongst them. The blessed Verse is saying that God Almighty revealed the Holy Qur'an to substantiate his Prophethood and remove their wonder.

It is saying that Qur'anic Verses are inimitable, namely no one is able to produce the like of the blessed Verses. Such inimitability suffices to substantiate his Prophethood and there remains no room for wondering since the Holy Qur'an is the Word of God Almighty rather than the Noble Prophet's (S) words and it serves as warning to people.

Surah Qaf - Verses 3-4

أَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا ذَٰلِكَ رَجْعٌ بَعِيدٌ

قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا تَنقُصُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ وَعِندَنَا كِتَابٌ حَفِيظٌ

3. "When we are dead and have become dust [shall we be resurrected?] That is a far return."
4. We know that which the earth takes of them [their dead bodies], and with Us is a Book preserving all things in it.

The Prophets' warning rests on paying heed to Resurrection.

By

"far return,"

disbelievers are saying that Resurrection does not stand to reason and common practice.

Thus, disbelievers may not produce any argument against Resurrection but it merely sounds impossible to them. Qur'anic exegets maintain that the interrogative particle opening Verse 3 reflects wonder and alludes to disbelievers' denial of Resurrection saying that when they die and turn to dust, it would be next to impossible to be resurrected and return to life.

Verse 4 is saying that disbelievers' wonder at Resurrection on the Last Day is for their conception that when man dies, nothing will remain of his flesh, skin, and organs in the earth; thus it would be impossible to be rejuvenated.

The blessed Verse in question aims to remove their disbelief in Resurrection saying that they are not supposed to imagine that they turn into absolute non-existence when nothing remains of their bodies when they turn into dust.

In other words, their denial springs from their unfounded conception that when man dies, his flesh and bones turn into dust and become parts of the earth and particles of the same turn into gases and vapors

as well and it would be impossible to collect them anew and find any intelligence as to their existence.

The response to such questions is that God Almighty whose Omnipotence encompasses all things, is All-Aware of such particles and shall collect them all when the need arises in such manner that the scattered particles of Iron may be collected from amongst a pile of dust using a magnet; it shall be far facile for God Almighty to collect the scattered particles of human beings.

In case disbelievers raise a question as to keeping records of human deeds for Resurrection, one may provide the response as per which all such records are being preserved in the 'preserved tablet' (lawh mahfud) and basically nothing will be lost in this world but deeds, despite alterations in their forms, remain.

"Preserving Book"

refers to a Book in which everything including human deeds are preserved in it. An exposition was made above[4] regarding the 'preserved tablet.'

Surah Qaf - Verse 5

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءهُمْ فَهُمْ فِي أَمْرٍ مَّرِيجٍ

5. Nay, but they have denied the truth [***the Holy Qur'an***] ***when it has come to them; thus they are in a confused state*** [***as to Prophethood and Resurrection***].

The Arabic word marij designates "agitation, confusion," as it is said in the Holy Qur'an regarding the intermingling of the water of two seas

"He has let loose the two seas [***the salt and fresh water***] ***intermingle"***[5].

The adjectival form marij is attested once in the Holy Qur'an connoting disbelievers' perplexity. Anxiety and perplexity spring from denial and disbelief but remembrance of God Almighty and paying attention to the Holy Qur'an lead to serenity and peace of mind.

Surah Qaf - Verses 6-8

أَفَلَمْ يَنظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاء فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَاهَا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِن فُرُوجٍ

وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ

تَبْصِرَةً وَذِكْرَى لِكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُّنِيبٍ

6. Have they not looked at the heaven above them, how We have made it and adorned it [***with stars***]***, and there are no rifts in it?***
7. And the earth! We have spread it out, and set thereon mountains standing firm, and have produced therein every kind of fresh plant.
8. An insight and a Reminder for every servant turning [***to Truth***].

Nature is a theology class;

(***"Have they not looked at the heaven above them?"***).

Call people unto God Almighty by illustrating your Calls with examples. Look at the heaven and the earth to perceive the possibility of Resurrection and Divine Omnipotence.

Thus, you may know the beauty, systematicity, and other characteristics of Divinely created creatures in the heaven and earth. The blessed Verse 6 opens with the interrogative particle (a-) to indicate wonder at disbelievers' denial of Creation and Resurrection.

It connotes wonder at disbelievers who do not look above at heavens to perceive the manner by which God Almighty created them and adorned them with stars. He filled the heaven with stars and galaxies standing one above another such that there remains no rift between them.

Nor do these disbelievers look at the earth to see that God Almighty has spread it on water and placed mountains on it so that they keep it firm on its place. God Almighty has made all types of creatures grow in pairs. The blessed Verse and the like of it reflect that all creatures, even plants, are in pairs and unity solely belongs to Divine Essence, the Originator of the world.

The following Verse is saying that one who reflects upon such exquisite creation, novel and beauteous system, and the magnificent palace of the world and notices the Glory and Grandeur of the Creator may perceive the Cause through the effect and such servant turns to the Creator of the world through perceiving the effects.

Surah Qaf - Verses 9-11

وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاء مَاء مُّبَارَكًا فَأَنبَتْنَا بِهِ جَنَّاتٍ وَحَبَّ الْحَصِيدِ

وَالنَّخْلَ بَاسِقَاتٍ لَّهَا طَلْعٌ نَّضِيدٌ

رِزْقًا لِّلْعِبَادِ وَأَحْيَيْنَا بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا كَذَٰلِكَ الْخُرُوجُ

9. And We send down blessed water* [*rain*] *from the sky, then We produce therewith gardens and grain* [*every kind of harvests*] *that are reaped.
10. And tall date-palms, with ranged clusters.
***11. A provision for* [*Allah's*] *servants. And We give life therewith to a dead land. Thus will be the Resurrection* [*of the dead from the graves*].**

Rain is a natural phenomenon but it depends on Divine Will. It rejuvenates the earth, provides it with blessings including destruction of blights, growth of plants, delicacy of the air, and flowing of springs. The Arabic word basiq is employed in the sense of "tall"; tal' designates "a blossom newly turned into date"; nadhid designates "ranged, compact"; and hasid denotes "reaped."

The most joyous moments for agriculturalists are the time of ripening and harvesting their crops;

(***"grains that are reaped"***).

The blessed Verses in question make use of rain and growth of plants to illustrate Resurrection.

Regarding;

"We send down blessed water from the sky,"

Imam Baqir (as) says:

*"There is no water in the earth unless it is mingled with that from the sky."*6

Imam 'Ali (as) washed his hands7 and face when it rained saying:

"This blessing is from the sky untouched by any hand or vessel."

Thus the blessed Verses in question are saying that the Glorious Divine Essence of Unity reminds His servants to bring His blessings to completion saying:

"We sent down rain so that trees and other plants grow and gardens and orchards be available to man for his sustenance and pleasure. We made tall and fruitful date-palms grow by rain."

The blessed Verse 11 is saying that God Almighty provided His servants with all plants as a blessing for their provision and sustenance.

Making mention of 'servants' may make a reference to the point that the main goal behind the creation of such natural phenomena including the growth of plants and sending down rain is to provide those who worship God Almighty and are obedient to Him with provision and sustenance and disbelievers and the disobedient make use of such natural resources because of the former as it is mentioned in the Divine

tradition addressed to the Noble Prophet (S):

“Had it been not for your sake, I would not have created the heavens.”

The tradition reflects that the natural world of existence was created for his sake. God Almighty gave life to dead cities through sending down rain.

“Thus will be the Resurrection [***of the dead from the graves***]***”***

alludes to convincing those who deny Resurrection such that in the same manner that God Almighty gives life to dead lands through water therewith plants grow from the earth, He is Omnipotent to give a new life to those who have died and have turned into dust.

Surah Qaf - Verses 12-14

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَأَصْحَابُ الرَّسِّ وَثَمُودُ

وَعَادٌ وَفِرْعَوْنُ وَإِخْوَانُ لُوطٍ

وَأَصْحَابُ الْأَيْكَةِ وَقَوْمُ تُبَّعٍ كُلٌّ كَذَّبَ الرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ وَعِيدِ

12. Denied before them [***polytheists of Mecca***] ***the people of Noah, and the dwellers of Rass, and*** [***the people of***] ***Thamud;***
13. And [***also the people of***] ***‘Ad, and Pharaoh, and the brothers of Lot;***
14. And the Dwellers of the Wood [***Ayka, namely the people of Shu‘ayb***]***, and the people of Tubba‘*** [***the kings of the Yemen***]***. Every one of them denied*** [***their***] ***Messengers; therefore, My Threat took effect*** [***and they perished***]***.***

The name of the people of Rass is attested in this Chapter and also in 25:29. Qur’anic exegets maintain that the people of Rass lived in Yamama. They had a Prophet by the name of Handalla, but they denied his Call and cast him into a well. Since the Arabic word rass denotes “well”, hence their designation ‘the people of Rass.’ Imam Sadiq (as) was inquired regarding the reason behind the torment inflicted upon the people of Rass.

He replied:

“Their women contended themselves with women [***i.e. they were lesbians***]***.”***[8]

The peoples of Thamud and ‘Ad were those of Prophets Salih and Hud (as). The people of Ayka were a

group of the people of Prophet Shu‘ayb (as) who lived in the woods. Their name is attested in Chapters 15 and 26.

Tubba‘ is the title of the kings of the Yemen. The people of Tubba‘ is applied to a group of the people of the Yemen who followed their kings and whose name is also attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur’an[9].

According to traditions, the king of the Yemen (Tubba‘) asked the two tribes of Aws and Khazraj:

“Stay in Yathrib (later Medina) until the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) be appointed to Prophethood and if I happen to be contemporaneous with him, I will serve and follow him.”[10]

The Holy Qur’an makes mention of the people of Lot (as) as

“brothers of Lot”

since they were all his kith and kin.[11] It is worthy of note, however, that according to the Holy Qur’an, the Prophets are the brothers of peoples and it is for this sake that the people of Lot (as) are referred to as his brothers.

The Holy Qur’an repeatedly reminds the Noble Prophet (S) of former Prophets (as) and their peoples and the point that their Prophetic Calls were denied and they were subject to persecutions. Thus, God Almighty consoles His Messenger (S) saying that if you see that disbelievers of Quraysh hurt you and attribute false accusations to you, former peoples were alike. Be patient against their persecutions in the manner that Arch-prophets did likewise.

Furthermore, these blessed Verses warn disbelievers against the torments to be inflicted upon them in this world since God Almighty inflicted torments like tempest, loud cries hear from the heaven (sayha), icy gale (sarsar), pouring down rocks on them such that they may fear such torments in this world and desist from denial of Prophets (as).

Surah Qaf - Verse 15

أَفَعَيِينَا بِالْخَلْقِ الْأَوَّلِ بَلْ هُمْ فِي لَبْسٍ مِّنْ خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ

***15. Were We then tired with the first creation** [**to be hopeless of creating you anew on the Day of Resurrection**]**? Nay, they are in confused doubt about a new creation** [**resurrection**].*

Creation of any existent being bears testimony to Divine Omnipotence to create it anew, since the first creation justifies the possibility of further creations.

Disbelievers may not produce any argument for substantiating their denial of Resurrection, but they merely entertain doubts;

(*“Nay, they are in confused doubt about a new creation* [*resurrection*]*”*).

The interrogative particle (a-) is employed to indicate denial. In other words, the blessed Verse is asking disbelievers whether they imagine that God Almighty is tired of the first creation and He is unable to create anew. Disbelievers are mistaken as to Divine Omnipotence as to creating anew unaware of the fact that they are subject to permanent change.

Surah Qaf - Verse 16

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

16. And verily We have created man and We know what his ownself whispers to him. And We are closer unto him than his jugular vein [*and We are in full control of everything*].

The Arabic word waswasa denotes ‘whisper’ and the same connotes unbefitting thought occurring to man’s heart. The word warid (“vein”) derives from w-r-d denoting ‘to go to water.’ Since vein is the means by which blood circulates between heart and other bodily organs, it is termed as warid.

The blessed Verse in question makes a reference to Divine Majestic Attributes of Originating creation and Divine Omniscience; the latter reflects that God Almighty created man ex nihilo and He is the Originator of his existence.

Since He is the Creator of man, He is All-Aware of his outward and inward qualities and deeds and He is Fully Aware that disbelievers’ denial of Resurrection springs from concupiscent temptations despite the fact that their innate natural disposition is aware of their Origin.

The blessed Verse may make a reference to the point that had those who denied Resurrection made use of their reason, they would have abstained from satanic temptations and they could acknowledge the veracity of Resurrection without entertaining any doubts as to the same. Other Divine Majestic Attributes include Comprehensiveness and Guardianship.

“And We are closer unto him than his jugular vein.”

Warid is the vein connected to heart and liver through which blood flows and waridan or shara’in are applied the twain blood vessels connecting heart to brain on which depends survival of the body. It is one of the closest things to man’s life such that if blood flow suffers from any defect, man will die. The blessed Verse makes a reference to Divine encompassing of existence and Divine Guardianship.

In other words, since existence depends upon God Almighty, He is closer to him than the jugular vein that keeps him alive. Such closeness reflects that God Almighty is closer to man than anyone else, since the existence of anything depends upon what realizes its existence and keeps it as it is. Since the Divine

Essence is the Creator, the Origin, and the Final End of creation, all created beings are encompassed by him and their existence depends upon Him.

How then He may be unaware of anything? It is worthy of note that these are all similitude and closeness to God Almighty is far superior to such things, but such illustration which makes use of intelligible, is the most evident means of exposition.

Now that we perceive that God Almighty encompasses all things and we are under His full Sway, we know that our words, deeds, thought, intentions, or even temptations occurring to our hearts are by no means concealed from Him.

Attending to this truth awakens man and acquaints him with his heavy responsibility and precise recording of his words and deeds to be presented at Divine Tribunal. Thus, the truth turns a neglectful and indifferent man into an alert, obedient, duty bound, and God fearing servant.

Surah Qaf - Verses 17-18

إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلاَّ لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

17. [***Remember***] ***that the two angels*** [***accompanying man***] ***receive*** [***man's deeds***]***, one sitting on the right and one on the left*** [***to note his deeds***]***.***
18. Not a word does he utter but there is a watcher [***recording angel***] ***by him ready*** [***to record it***]***.***

The blessed Verses are saying:

"Remember when the twain angels sitting on the right and left sides of man accompanying and watching him, record his deeds."

In other words, besides Divine Omniscience as to man's inward and outward deeds and intentions, two angels are also assigned to keep records of his deeds. The twain angles watch man on both sides and accompany him at all times. They never leave him alone so that further emphasis be laid on the question of keeping records of deeds. The Arabic word talaqqi denotes 'receive, record," and mutalaqqiyan is applied to the twain angles appointed to keep records of man's deeds.

The Arabic present participle

qa'id (***"sitting"***)

derives from q-'-d ("sit") but it ad hoc connotes 'companion, watcher.' In other words, the blessed

Verses do not intend to say that the twain angels sit on the right and left hand sides of man, since man is sitting at some time but walks at some other time; the expression connotes that the twain angels accompany man at all times and watch his deeds.

Surah Qaf – Verse 19

وَجَاءتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ

19. And the stupor of death will come in truth** [**and it is said unto man**]: **"This is what you escaped at all times!"

Man loses his consciousness at the moment of death;

(***"the stupor of death will come in truth"***).

The Arabic word sakra denotes the state in which man loses his consciousness and reason. The word tahyid designates escape and evasion.

Man's fear and anxiety at the moment of death is such that the Holy Qur'an refers to it as

"stupor of death,"

in like manner, the fear of Divine Tribunal on the Day of Resurrection shall lead man to such state that it is elsewhere expressed in the Holy Qur'an[12] as:

"You shall see people as in a drunken state, yet they will not be drunken, but severe will be the torment of God."

At any rate,

"stupor of death"

is such state of unconsciousness occurring to one in throes of death that it is as if man loses his consciousness and his soul desires to separate from body and the worst state of man is that in which soul departs from body. It will be at that time that Divine Mercy will be bestowed upon believers and veils will be cast from their eyes and they will see the abodes prepared for them.

Thus, the souls of believers willingly turn toward the other world and the angel of death will bear unto them the glad tidings of Paradise and its Bounties. Nonetheless, unfortunate will be disbelievers, hypocrites, and the disobedient perceiving that Divine Wrath, rather than His Mercy, and the angels of torment warn them against Divine torment.

The stupor shall be the inevitable death. The past form of the verb ja'at may refer to the point that death

is inevitable and no one may escape it.

Good for those who, in such state, hear the message;

“Come back to your Lord well-pleased and well-pleasing”[13].

Surah Qaf - Verses 20-21

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْوَعِيدِ

وَجَاءتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّعَهَا سَائِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ

20. And the Trumpet [*of Resurrection*] ***will be blown that will be the Day when the warning of torment shall be realized.***
21. And every person will come forth [*on to the scene of Resurrection*] ***along with two angels, one driving him forward and another bearing witness*** [*to his words and deeds*].

Blowing the Trumpet ad hoc refers to the second blowing since according to Qur’anic Verses and traditions, the first blowing will occur when the world disintegrates and perishes such that no creature shall remain in this world. It shall be upon the second blowing that all creatures find a new life and all men depart their graves to hastily proceed toward their meeting place where they are supposed to meet their Lord.

It shall be at that time that Resurrection shall be established and angels shall say this is what the Prophets talked about and warned men against. The following blessed Verse treats of the state following death when on the Day of Resurrection each of the obliged shall be accompanied by an angel driving them toward Reckoning and an angel shall follow him to bear witness to his deeds recorded. No one may escape or deny Reckoning at that time.[14]

It may also make a reference to the aforesaid twain angels (raqib and ‘atid) responsible for recording man’s deeds.

Surah Qaf - Verses 22-23

لَقَدْ كُنتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنكَ غِطَاءكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ

وَقَالَ قَرِينُهُ هَذَا مَا لَدَيَّ عَتِيدٌ

22. [***It will be said to him***]***: "Verily, you were*** [***totally***] ***heedless of this*** [***scene***]***. Now We have removed from you your covering*** [***of neglect***] ***and sharp is your sight this Day!"***
23. And his companion [***angel***] ***will say: "Here is*** [***the Record of his deeds***] ***ready with me!"***

This world is the abode of neglect and the world to come is that of vigilance. This world cast the veil of neglect on man with its charming appearances and man in his turn makes veils of neglect for himself. The majority of Qur'anic exegets maintain that the blessed Verses in question are addressed to disbelievers. When they enter the Day of Resurrection, they are overwhelmed by fear and anxiety.

It will be said unto them:

"This is the Day against which you were warned by the Prophets but you were heedless. Today, the veils are removed from your eyes and you sight is sharp. You see what you used to disbelieve and deny."

According to Qur'anic exegets, the antecedent of the word 'companion' (qarina) in the blessed Verse 23 may be either of the twain aforesaid angels (raqib and 'atid) recording man's deeds on his right and left hand sides in this world.

Thus, the 'companion' will say on the Day of Resurrection

"His deeds and states are recorded by me."

Surah Qaf – Verses 24-26

أَلْقِيَا فِي جَهَنَّمَ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ

مَّنَّاعٍ لِّلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ مُّرِيبٍ

الَّذِي جَعَلَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا آخَرَ فَأَلْقِيَاهُ فِي الْعَذَابِ الشَّدِيدِ

24. [***Allah will say to the driving and witnessing angels:***] ***"Both of you throw into Hell every stubborn disbeliever.***
25. "[***the one who is the***] ***Hinderer of good, transgressor, arousing doubt,***
26. "Who sets up another god with Allah. Then both of you cast him in the severe torment."

The present participle

manna' [***"hinderer"***]

derives from m-n-‘ and the present participle

***murib** [“arousing doubt”]*

deriving from r-y-b is applied to one who arouses doubt accompanied with pessimism in others.

The present participial form

***kaffar** [“disbeliever”]*

designates the zenith and depth of disbelief in a man’s being naturally reflecting animosity and stubbornness arousing doubts in others as to the Truth of God’s Path.

Such person naturally ends up with severe torment in Hell. It is worthy of note that the twain angels are appointed to throw such person into Hell and they are either driving or witnessing (raqib and ‘atid). However, according to Shi’i and also Sunni sources, the Verse is addressed to the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) and Imam ‘Ali (as).[15]

The blessed Verse 26 is saying that such disbeliever is the one who associated idols and other false objects of worship with the One God and such disbelievers has to be cast into severe torment.

1. Tafsir Qurtubi, vol. 9, p. 6171.
2. Tafsir fi Thialal, vol. 7, p. 547.
3. Tafsir Majma‘ al-Bayan, vol. 9, p. 140.
4. 13:39
5. 55:19
6. Usul Kafi, vol. 6, p. 387.
7. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 59, p. 27.
8. Usul Kafi, vol. 5, p.551.
9. 44:37
10. Tafsir Majma‘ al-Bayan.
11. Ibid.
12. 22:2
13. 89:28
14. Majma‘ al-Bayan.
15. For further details, consult exegetic works. Details have not been dealt with for the sake of brevity.

Surah Qaf, Verses 27 - 45

Surah Qaf - Verses 27-29

قَالَ قَرِينُهُ رَبَّنَا مَا أَطْغَيْتُهُ وَلَكِن كَانَ فِي ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ

قَالَ لَا تَخْتَصِمُوا لَدَيَّ وَقَدْ قَدَّمْتُ إِلَيْكُم بِالْوَعِيدِ

مَا يُبَدَّلُ الْقَوْلُ لَدَيَّ وَمَا أَنَا بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ

27. His companion [***Satan***] ***will say: "Our Lord! I did not push him to transgression, but he was himself in error far astray."***
28. [***Allah***] ***will say:"Dispute not in front of Me, I had already sent you the warning.***
29. The Sentence [***as to casting disbelievers into Hell***] ***that comes from Me cannot be changed, and I am not unjust to*** [***My***] ***servants."***

Imam Sadiq (as) is quoted as saying:

"[*The word*]

companion [***attested***]

*in this Verse refers to Satan."*1

It is attested elsewhere that Satan becomes the companion of certain evil-doers.2 One of the factors leading man to Hell is bad company, as the Qur'anic Verses makes mention of Satan as a companion leading man to Hell. Complaints of the people of the Hell include their regret for bad company in this world, as it is attested in the Holy Qur'an3:

"Ah! Woe unto me! Would that I had never taken so-and-so as an intimate friend!"

There will be disputes on the Day of Resurrection amongst evil-doers with one another, between evil-doers and corrupt leaders, and between evil-doers and Satan each of whom make attempts at putting the blame of their own sins on the other. Like scenes are to be found in the Holy Qur'an.

At times they say unto one another:

"Had it not been for you, we should certainly have been believers!"4.

"They will reply: "Nay you yourselves were not believers"5.

In another scene, they will say unto corrupt leaders:

"Indeed, we were following you. Can you avail us anything against Allah's torment?"[6]

They censure Satan in another scene and he says:

"Therefore, blame me not, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. I deny your former deed in associating me as a partner with Allah"[7].

The blessed Verse 27 says:

"Our Lord! I did not push him to transgression, but he was himself in error far astray."

The Hell repeatedly says: "Is there any more," as the people of Hell used to repeat the same in worshipping mammon, i.e. mundane property and worldly offices and transgressing the rights of others.

At any rate, the stubborn disbelievers' disputes with Satan on the Day of Resurrection removes the veil from their destiny.

They censure the tempting devils for all the sins committed by them, but their companion, Satan, says:

"O Lord! I did not push him to disobedience nor did I force him to go astray, but he chose this way out of his own will and he was in astray far away."

It is worthy of note that Satan does not intend to deny his role as the tempter, but he intends to say that he did not force anyone, but man welcomed his temptations out of his own will and desire.

Thus, the blessed Verse in question is not inconsistent with another Qur'anic Verse[8] saying:

"Then I will certainly mislead them all."

The blessed Verse 27 apparently serves as a defense for Satan and no mention is made of disbelievers' complaints against Satan, but taking into account their disputes on the Day of Resurrection in other Qur'anic Verses and the following One, their words become briefly apparent, since the blessed Verse 28 says:

*"[**Allah**] **will say:"Dispute not in front of Me, I had already sent you the warning"***

and I have informed you in advance of this dire destiny.

The blessed Verse on the one side alludes to God's words unto Satan;

*"[**Allah**] **said: 'Go and whosoever of them follows you, surely Hell will be the recompense of you – an ample recompense,"***[9]

and on the other, God Almighty had warned men thus:

"That I will fill Hell with you and those of them that follow you"[10].

Such warnings are to be found in other Qur'anic Verses as well reflecting that God Almighty has given His Ultimatum to devils and men, warning them against tempting and being tempted.

The blessed Verse 39 says:

"The Sentence** [**as to casting disbelievers into Hell**] **that comes from Me cannot be changed, and I am not unjust to** [**My**] **servants."

The word Sentence (qawl) ad hoc refers to the warnings mentioned in different Qur'anic Verses examples of which were mentioned above. The Arabic word dallam is the intensified present participial form designating absolute negation of wrong-doing by God Almighty. In other words, the Most Gracious and Just Allah is by no means unjust to His servants. The blessed Verse in question and the like Qur'anic Verses bear testimony to human choice.

Surah Qaf - Verse 30

يَوْمَ نَقُولُ لِجَهَنَّمَ هَلِ امْتَلَأْتِ وَتَقُولُ هَلْ مِن مَّزِيدٍ

30. On the Day when We will say unto Hell: "Are you filled?" It will say: "Are there any more?"

Hell is intelligent in some way or another as it is addressed by God Almighty and thus replies His question:

"Are there any more?"

Likewise, people of Hell used to say the same when they were preoccupied in this world with worshipping worldly possessions and offices and transgressing people's rights.

The imperative verbal form;

"Remember"

in the blessed Verse in question may refer to destiny, namely:

"O Muhammad** [**SAW**]**! Remember the Day when Hell will be filled with jinn and mankind and God Almighty asks Hell: "Are you filled?"

Hell will reply in verbal or non-verbal language:

"Are there any more?"

The blessed Verse bears testimony to the point that Allah's promises and warnings are true and Hell shall be filled with disbelievers and the disobedient.

Surah Qaf - Verses 31-33

وَأُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ

هَذَا مَا تُوعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ حَفِيظٍ

مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَن بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاء بِقَلْبٍ مُّنِيبٍ

31. And Paradise will be brought near to the God fearing, not far off.
32. [***It will be said unto them:***] ***"This is what you were promised –*** [***it is***] ***for the repentant and preservers*** [***of Allah's bounds***]***,***
33. "Who feared the Most Gracious [***Allah***] ***inwardly and brought a heart turned in repentance*** [***to Him***]***.***

Piety and fear of God drive man closer to Paradise. Following a treatment of disbelievers' state after death and blowing of the Trumpet and their arrival at Divine Tribunal and torment of Hell, the blessed Verses in question reflect the state of the God fearing.

The former shall be entangled with hardship and torment and Hell drives them toward itself and expects enthusiastically more of the people of the Hell; au contraire, the latter shall proceed toward Paradise.

"Not far off"

may reflect that Paradise shall not be far away from the God fearing, but it is in their inward natural disposition manifesting itself on the Day of Resurrection. The antecedent of the demonstrative pronoun 'this' in the blessed Verse 32 is Paradise promised to whoever turned from disbelief and polytheism to monotheism and abstained from committing what was forbidden.

Such people fear God in their hearts without perceiving the same with their outward senses and live in such state at all times;

(***"Who feared the Most Gracious*** [***Allah***] ***inwardly and brought a heart turned in repentance*** [***to Him***]***"***).

Paradise shall become closer to those who enter Resurrection with pure hearts turned from people toward the Truth. The people of Paradise as mentioned in the blessed Verses in question possess four

characteristics.

Firstly, they fear God Almighty and as mentioned elsewhere, fear of God Almighty is higher in degree than faith the relation between the twain is that of inclusion; in other words, the God fearing have faith, but some of the faithful may lack fear of God Almighty.

Thus, fear of God Almighty stands above faith in matters of degrees. Secondly, the people of Paradise are those who have returned from disobedience to Divine Command. They never commit sins willfully. Thus is the state of the God fearing.

Thirdly,

***"Who feared the Most Gracious** [**Allah**] **inwardly and brought a heart turned in repentance** [**to Him**]"*

refers to those who regard their Lord as the Most Gracious, but His Glory and Grandeur overwhelms them to such degree that they fear His Wrath at all times.

Fourthly, of the attributes of the people of Paradise is that they enter Resurrection with pure hearts purified from natural impurities. They turn away from people and turn to God Almighty. The Arabic word khashiyya is applied to the fear arising from Divine Omniscience and Grandeur.

Three kinds of hearts are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

A. The pure heart devoid of polytheism, hypocrisy, hatred, and other vices;

(***"Except him who brings to Allah a pure heart,"***)11.

B. The repentant heart repenting to God Almighty following committing sins;

(***"And brought a heart turned in repentance** [**to Him**],"*)12.

C. The sick heart entertaining hypocrisy and disbelief in God Almighty.

The sickness worsens if it is left on its own;

(***"In their heart is a sickness,"***)13.

Surah Qaf - Verses 34-35

ادْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُلُودِ

لَهُم مَّا يَشَاؤُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ

34. [***It shall be said unto them:***] ***"Enter you therein in peace and security – this is a Day of eternal life*** [***for you***]***!"***
35. There, they will have all that they desire – and [***for them***] ***We have more*** [***than what they desire***]***.***

Four virtues were enumerated for the God fearing in the preceding blessed Verses: repentance, preservation of one's self and Divine bounds, Fear of God Almighty, repentant heart. Four attributes are enumerated in these two blessed Verses: security, peace, eternal life, and enjoyment of Divine Bounties. Mundane Bounties involve blights whose likes are not to be found in Paradise:

1. They involve pain and hardship, but nothing like them exist in Paradise;

(***"peace and security"***)***.***

2. They are transient whereas Paradise is eternal;

(***"Day of eternal life"***)***.***

3. Worldly Bounties are limited in range, but whatever one desires is to be found in Paradise;

(***"There, they will have all that they desire"***)***.***

4. Mundane Bounties come to an end, but those in Paradise are on the increase;

(***"We have more*** [***than what they desire***]***"***)***.***

It is worthy of note that the twain blessed Verses in question are addressed to those who possess the attributes enumerated in the preceding Verses. The God fearing will be admitted to Paradise as the abode of Divine Grace, peace, and security warding them from whatever sounds unpleasant to them. Paradise shall be everlasting abode of the God fearing therein they shall be safe from any peril.

"There, they will have all that they desire,"

since they represent Divine Attributes including Creativity, namely the people of Paradise represent Divine Creativity and they will have whatever they desire.

"And [***for them***] ***We have more*** [***than what they desire***]***"***

may reflect that there will be in store for those doing righteous good deeds what is neither seen, nor heard, nor occurred to anyone.

Surah Qaf – Verses 36-37

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّن قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُم بَطْشًا فَنَقَّبُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ هَلْ مِن مَّحِيصٍ

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِمَن كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

36. And how many a generation We have destroyed before them who were stronger in power than them. And [***when Our torment came***] ***they found their ways into cities*** [***with their might***]***! Could they find any means of escape*** [***for themselves***]***?***
37. Indeed, therein [***historical developments and destruction of the disobedient***] ***is truly a reminder for him who has an*** [***awakened***] ***heart or gives ear*** [***to the words of Truth***] ***while he is heedful.***

The Arabic word qarn denotes approximation of two things. It is also applied to generation or people living in the same era. The word connotes a span of time (thirty or one hundred years). Batsh designates 'seize by power' and at times 'fight, conflict.'

The verbal form naqqabu derives from n-q-b 'make a hole or breach.' The cognate word manqabat is applied to virtues and merits that affect people's hearts. The contextual meaning of the blessed Verse 36 is that some of the former peoples penetrated into the realms of other people and conquered them. The Arabic word qalb does not designate the bodily organ, but human perception.

Imam Kadim (as) is quoted as saying:

"***Heart***

(***qalb***) designates intellect ('aql)."14

We find a like Verse in 67:10;

"And they will say: 'Had we but listened or used our intellect, we would not have been among the dwellers of the blazing Fire!"

The blessed Verse juxtaposes intellection with hearing and the blessed Verse in question heart is juxtaposed with hearing. Thus, the word 'heart' connotes 'intellect.' The expression alqa al-sam' designates lending one's ear so as to learn; in other words, it refers to the ear of the soul rather than the organ of hearing.

The Arabic word shahid is employed in the sense of witness and present, namely one who attends some session and listens attentively to words rather than one who is physically present somewhere but is mentally absent.

It is worthy of note that the blessed Verses in question treat of the states of disbelievers and the God fearing and their arrival on the Resurrection scene following the blowing of the Trumpet for warning those who denied the Divine Origin of existence and Resurrection and reminding them of those who suffered some many afflictions owing to denying the Prophets despite their physical strength and power

wielding sway in the lands like the peoples of ‘Ad and Thamud who suffered torments and became desperate.

Such warnings may give a lesson to disbelievers. But if they do not fear the torments in the Hereafter springing from their vicious deeds, they may at least be afraid of the recompense of their vices in this world and thereby let go of their false pride and obstinacy.

The blessed Verse 37 is saying that such words are reminders to those whose hearts are pure or those who listen to the wondrous words of Truth.

Surah Qaf – Verse 38

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَمَا مَسَّنَا مِن لُّغُوبٍ

38. And verily We created the heavens and the earth and all between them in six days and nothing of pain or fatigue touched Us.

There are secrets and acts of wisdom in the creation of creatures in time, but neither frailty nor fatigue may penetrate Divine Omnipotence. If God Almighty wills, He may create all things in one single moment.

Thus, the blessed Verse in question says:

“And verily We created the heavens and the earth and all between them in six days and nothing of pain or fatigue touched Us.”

The Arabic word lughub designates fatigue and weariness. It goes without saying that a being with limited power and strength will be encompassed with fatigue and weariness if it exerts itself beyond its limit, but such thing is not applicable to the Being whose Omnipotence is infinite.

Therefore, the Being Who is Able to create the enormous heavens and the earth with so many planets and galaxies is Able to give life anew to man following his death.

A number of Qur’anic exegets make mention of an occasion of Revelation for the blessed Verse in question saying that Jews imagined that God Almighty created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on Saturday and put one leg on the other as a consequence of which they regard such posture solely belongs to God Almighty and human beings are not supposed to assume such posture. Thus, the blessed Verse in question was revealed and put an end to such hilarious superstitions.[15]

However, such occasion of Revelation is not inconsistent with the question of Resurrection treated herein.

It also serves as an argument substantiating Unity, Omniscience, and Omnipotence of God Almighty Who created the heavens and the earth with so many wonders and billions of living creatures and wondrous secrets and orders. Reflection upon one instance of creation may lead us toward the Omnipotent Creator Whose Omnipotence has set this enormous wheel to motion and has shed the light of life everywhere.

The motif of the creation of the heavens and the earth in 'six days' is repeatedly mentioned in Qur'anic Verses. The Arabic word yawm, as mentioned above, denotes 'day' but it connotes 'era' in many an instance rather than the twenty four hour span of time.

For instance, it is said:

"One day [once] people lived under the auspices of the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) and another day, the tyrannous Umayyads and 'Abbasids wielded sway."

It goes without saying that 'day' in such expressions connotes span of time be it one year, one hundred, thousands, or millions of years. For instance, it is said the globe was set ablaze one day and it became cold the other day, ready to accommodate life. All these expressions make a reference to spans of time.

Therefore, the blessed Verse in question reflects that God Almighty created the heavens, the earth, and all creatures in six spans of time. Thus, there remains no room for the question as per which there were no days and nights prior to the creation of the sun and the earth so that Creator of the world could be Able to create it in six days.

Surah Qaf - Verses 39-40

فَاصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَارَ السُّجُودِ

39. Therefore, bear with patience [against] all that they say and glorify the praises of your Lord before the rising of the sun and before [its] setting.
40. And during a part of the night [also] glorify His praises and [do likewise] after the prostrations [of prayers].

The times of prayer in the Islamic doctrine are based on natural phenomena like the moon and the sun visible to all people;

(***"before the rising of the sun and before [its] setting"***).

In these blessed Verses, God Almighty addresses his Noble Messenger (S) and commands him to be patient against the unfounded words of disbelievers and occupy himself with praising and glorifying his Lord before sun rise whose perfect instance includes the morning prayer and its supererogatory prayers in which God Almighty is praised and glorified.

The phrase:

"before sun set"

may connote evening or noon and evening prayers or both of them.

The blessed Verse 40 opens thus:

"And during a part of the night" (***wa min al-layl***)

in which the disjunctive preposition min connotes

'a part of the night'

spent in praising and glorification of God Almighty. The phrase 'during a part of the night' may indicate early and late evening prayers.

The phrase:

'after the prostrations' (***adbar al-sujud***)

designates praising and glorifying God Almighty following prostrations.

It is narrated from Imam 'Ali (as) that:

'after the prostrations'

refers to the two units of prayer established after sun set as adbar al-nujum designates two units of supererogatory prayers.[16] The preceding blessed Verses seemingly make a reference to the five daily prayers; since the main intention behind establishing prayers is to praise and glorify God Almighty, all prayers are referred to as glorification.

Surah Qaf - Verses 41-42

وَاسْتَمِعْ يَوْمَ يُنَادِ الْمُنَادِ مِن مَّكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ

يَوْمَ يَسْمَعُونَ الصَّيْحَةَ بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُرُوجِ

41. And listen on the Day when the Caller will call from a near place.
42. The Day when they will hear the shout in truth [***from the Trumpet to be blown by Israfil***]***: that will be the Day of coming out*** [***of people from the graves***]***.***

The blessed Verse 11 treated of the principle of the dead coming out of the graves and the blessed Verses in question deal with the time of coming out.

The expression:

'a near place'

makes a reference to the point that the vibrations of the sound of the Call shall travel through the air in such manner that it will be as if everyone may hear it likewise from a near place and it shall be on that Day that all the resurrected people shall hear the voice of the Caller from a near place.

The word:

'shout' (***sayha***)

does not designate the first shout marking the end of this world, but it denotes the second shout through which the dead shall raise from the graves.

The blessed Verse 41 is saying:

"O Muhammad (S)! Be patient and persevere in obedience to the Commands of God Almighty until the time when you hear the Caller from a near place; in other words the Call shall be heard before long from a place near unto you."

The Caller shall be Israfil calling from a rock in Jerusalem saying: 'O decayed bones, disintegrated joints, decomposed flesh, and scattered hairs! God Almighty commands you to integrate for the Day of Recompense.'"

The blessed Verse 42 is saying that on that Day when the shout shall be heard in truth, it shall be the Day of coming out from the graves and from the dust of the earth. The latter Verse provides further exposition for the former.

Surah Qaf - Verses 43-44

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي وَنُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْنَا الْمَصِيرُ

يَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ الْأَرْضُ عَنْهُمْ سِرَاعًا ذَلِكَ حَشْرٌ عَلَيْنَا يَسِيرٌ

43. Indeed, We it is Who give life and cause death; and to Us is the final return [***of all***].
44. On the Day when the earth shall be cleft asunder from them [***they will come out***] ***hastening forth. That will be a gathering*** [***of all mankind***]***, facile for Us.***

God Almighty is the only being Able to give life and cause death. He shall cleave the earth asunder for mankind to come out of the graves. He shall put together the scattered bodies.

The blessed Verse 43 is saying that God Almighty gives life to the dead sperm inside the womb and causes it to grow and leaves it live for a certain span of time, but when it reaches its end, there shall be no delay in causing it to die.

In the same manner that life was given to man, He will cause him to die and He is Omnipotent to make his final return unto Him; in other words, He is Able to give a new life to man on the Day of Resurrection.

The blessed Verse 44 provides further details by saying that their return unto God Almighty shall occur on the Day when the earth shall cleave asunder from them and they shall be given a new life and shall hasten to leave their graves;

(***"On the Day when the earth shall be cleft asunder from them*** [***they will come out***] ***hastening forth"***).

Thus the blessed Verse closes:

"That will be a gathering [***of all mankind***]***, facile for Us."***

The Arabic word hashr designates 'gathering from all sides.' It goes without saying that it shall be facile for the Creator of the heavens, the earth, and what exists between the twain to resurrect the dead. Difficulty and facility are basically applicable to beings with limited power, but the Being Whose Power is infinite may easily do anything.

It is worthy of note that according to a number of traditions:

"The first men who leave the graves and enter the scene of Resurrection are the Noble Prophet of Islam (*S*) *accompanied by Imam 'Ali* (*as*)*."*[17]

Surah Qaf - Verse 45

نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ وَمَا أَنتَ عَلَيْهِم بِجَبَّارٍ فَذَكِّرْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَن يَخَافُ وَعِيدِ

45. We know best what they [***disbelievers***] ***say. And you are not the one to force them*** [***to believe***]***. But warn by the Qur'an him who fears My Warning.***

The Arabic word jabbar designates both “All-Powerful” as one of the Most Beauteous Names of God Almighty and “tyrannous” which is a vicious quality. It is worthy of note that the Chapter opens with taking an oath to the Holy Qur’an and closes with reminding people to attend to reading the Holy Qur’an and act upon the Injunctions mentioned therein.

The blessed Verse in question, addressed to the Noble Prophet of Islam (S), is saying that God Almighty is All-Aware of disbelievers’ false accusations as to the Noble Prophet’s (S) sorcery and madness and their denial of Resurrection and false attributes to Godhead.

Nonetheless, the Noble Prophet (S) is enjoined to fulfill his duties of Prophethood as to preach the Qur’anic Verses, warn disbelievers against torments in this world and the Hereafter, and guide people to the Straight Path. It is said unto the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) that he is unable to force them to believe and acknowledge Divine Unity.

It is mentioned elsewhere in the Holy Qur’an[18]:

“You are only a warner for those who fear it [***Resurrection and Divine Wrath***]***.”***

Finally, a number of traditions will be quoted on the Gloriousness of the Holy Qur’an.

It is narrated from Imam Baqir (as):

“Verily, God Almighty has included in His Book what is required by the Muslim community and has made expositions regarding the same for His Messenger (S); He has apportioned measures for everything and has set the Holy Qur’an as the Guide for the same.”[19]

Imam Hasan ibn ‘Ali (as) is quoted as saying:

“Illuminating lights [*of Guidance*] *and the curing physics of hearts are to be found in the Holy Qur’an.”*[20]

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

“I leave two things with you: the Qur’an and my family, so long as you grasp them, you shall not go astray.”[21]

According to a Prophetic tradition:

“The superiority of the Qur’an over all words is like that of God over creatures.”[22]

The Noble Prophet of Islam (S) is quoted as saying:

“It is incumbent upon you to remember the Qur’an, since the Qur’an is a cure, a useful physic, the guard of one who grasps it, and the deliverer of one who follows it.”[23]

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

*“Verily, the Holy Qur’an is a hinderer and a commander, it commands man to [find one’s path toward] Paradise and hinders man from [entering] Hell.”*24

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

*“Indeed, I leave amongst you the Book of Allah and it is the fast grip of Allah; whoever follows it will be guided and whoever turns away from it will go astray.”*25

Imam Sadiq (S) said:

“Verily, Allah taught His Messenger (S) the meaning and interpretation of the Glorious Qur’an and the Noble Prophet (S) taught the same to the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali (as).

O Lord! Rank us amongst the followers of the Holy Qur’an, the Noble Prophet (S) and the Infallible Imams (as). Amen, O Lord of the worlds!

1. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 5, p. 323.
2. Tafsir al-Mizan.
3. 25:28
4. 34:31
5. 37:29
6. 14:21
7. 14:21
8. 38:82
9. 17:63
10. 38:85
11. 26:89
12. 50:33
13. 2:10
14. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn; Usul Kafi, vol. 1, p. 16.
15. Tafsir Durr al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 110.
16. Manhaj; Tafsir Maraghi; Masa’il, vol. 4, p. 73.
17. Kitab al-Khisal; Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 119.
18. 79:45
19. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 92, p. 84.
20. Jami‘ al-Akhbar wa al-Àthar, vol. 1, p. 164.
21. Ibid, Kitab al-Qur’an, vol.1, p. 94.
22. Ibid, p. 182.
23. Ibid, p. 432.
24. Mir’at al-‘Uqul, vol. 12, p. 481; Jami‘ al-Ahadith, vol. 1, p. 107.
25. Kanz al-‘Ummal, vol. 1, p. 185.

Surah al-Dhariyat, Chapter 51, Verses 1 - 23

(The Scattering Winds)
Section (juz' 26-27)
Number of Verses: 60

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The Chapter has sixty Verses and it was revealed in Mecca.

The title of the Chapter derives from its opening Verse:

"By the scattering winds"

connoting harsh winds that scatter everything. The Chapter opening and closing with a treatment of Resurrection deals mainly with Divine Unity, Divine Manifestations in the world of existence, the story of angels receiving Abraham's (as) hospitality and bearing to him the glad tidings of a child to be born to him, warning against destruction of the people of Lot (as), and a reference to a number of Prophets (as) like Moses and Noah (as) and the peoples of 'Ad and Thamud.

Making mention of the history of former Prophets (as) and the hardships they experienced for guiding their peoples, the Chapter in question calls the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) to persevere and be patient in proclaiming his Call.

Merits of Recitation of the Chapter

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

"One who recites Surah al-Dhariyat in the day or at night, God Almighty will improve his life and sustenance, providing him with abundant provision, and illuminating his grave with a light shining to the Day of Resurrection [*provided that he acts upon Qur'anic Injunctions*]*."*[1]

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 1-4

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

وَالذَّارِيَاتِ ذَرْوًا

فَالْحَامِلَاتِ وِقْرًا

فَالْجَارِيَاتِ يُسْرًا

فَالْمُقَسِّمَاتِ أَمْرًا

1. By the winds that scatter everything forcefully.
2. Then by the clouds bearing heavy weight** [**of water**]**.
3. Then by the ships that float with ease.
4. Then by angels distributing the affairs by** [**Allah's**] **Command.

In the opening four blessed Verses of the Chapter in question God Almighty swears by four great things in the world of creation, saying that what the Prophets promised you concerning the exalted states and Bounties in store for good-doers in the Hereafter are certain and true and the Recompense of deeds shall be given at Divine Tribunal in the Hereafter such that each and every person shall certainly be recompensed for his deeds.

Qur'anic exegets' views concerning the opening four blessed Verses of the Chapter in question:

1. By the winds dispersing the clouds or dust. By the angels who disperse the clouds. By the women who disseminate generations of mankind through conception and pregnancy.

2. By the clouds bearing the heavy weight of rain by the angels responsible for making the clouds heavy with the weight of rain to flow. By the women carrying the burden of pregnancy.

3. By the ships floating in the sea with ease. By the planets, the sun, and the moon circling in their orbits. By the winds that move around.

4. Then these are the distributors of affairs or the angels serving as agents of the affairs of creation, responsible for sending down rain and distributors of the provisions of creatures, since each kind of angels are responsible for fulfilling certain duties so that the world of creation be preserved through order.

Ibn al-Kawwa' asked the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) regarding the opening four blessed

Verses and narrated from Mujahid that ‘distributors’ refers to the four archangels responsible for the affairs of mankind: Gabriel for severity, Michael for Mercy, ‘Izra’il for taking life, and Israfil for blowing the Trumpet or distributing the winds that distribute the clouds throughout the world.

The author of [the exegetic work titled] Kashshaf and Tabarsi narrate from Ibn ‘Abbas and Mujahid who in turn narrate from Ibn al-Kawwa’ that the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali (as) was asked while preaching on the pulpit:

“O Commander of the Faithful (as)! I ask you a few questions. Tell me what is meant by:

‘al-Dhariyat Dharwa?’”

He replied:

“The wind is being intended.”

I inquired:

‘What about

fa-al-hamilat waqra?’

He replied:

‘The clouds are being meant.’

I further asked:

‘What is intended by

fa-al-muqassimat amra?’

He answered:

‘Angels are being meant.’”

The tradition is attested in many a tradition source. The tradition in question bears testimony to the aforesaid view as per which dhariyat, hamilat, jariyat, and muqassimat designate the wind, the clouds, the ships, and the distributing angels respectively.

Certain Qur’anic exegets have been quoted as saying that in all instances, the word

‘Lord’

is the object of oaths, since it is solely befitting to swear by God Almighty.

In this vein, a tradition is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) as per which he said:

"No one is allowed to take an oath unless he swears by God Almighty, but He may swear by any of His creatures. God Almighty swears by these creatures since they are of great benefits. Divine Unity is also further substantiated through such oaths. The fundamentals of the physical world include these four things; even if one of the four fails to function or transgress its bounds, the affairs of all mankind and also all creatures shall be ruined."

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 5-6

إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَصَادِقٌ

وَإِنَّ الدِّينَ لَوَاقِعٌ

5. Indeed, that which you are promised is certainly true.
6. And indeed, the [*Day of*] ***Recompense is certain to occur.***

God Almighty fulfills the Promises given to His servants in this world and the Hereafter. God Almighty whose Manifestations of Omnipotence are visible in the world of creation is Able to fulfill His Promises.

The twain blessed Verses in question serve as the apodoses of the oaths to such multiplicities in the natural phenomena and their distribution as promised by the Prophets including the Rewards, Chastisements, Paradise, and Hell which are all true. Since the oath taken is supposed to be consistent with what is mentioned as the substantiation thereof, making mention of the multiplicities of the natural phenomena, e.g. wind, rain, and cloud, may make a reference to the point that despite the contradiction and dispersion of natural phenomena, God Almighty has removed such contradiction and dispersion though His Omniscience and Omnipotence and they all constitute an orderly world.

Likewise, it was promised by the Prophets as to getting together of all mankind and jinn living in dispersion and different spatial and temporal spheres that on the Promised Day they shall get together in one single line. These temporally disintegrated creatures shall unite on the Day of Resurrection. Thus, all different and dispersed deeds committed in this world shall be presented to them in the Books of Deeds and those committing them shall be recompensed.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 7-9

وَالسَّمَاء ذَاتِ الْحُبُكِ

إِنَّكُمْ لَفِي قَوْلٍ مُّخْتَلِفٍ

يُؤْفَكُ عَنْهُ مَنْ أُفِكَ

7. By the heaven abounding in beauteous paths and beauties,
8. Surely, you are [***perplexed***] ***in having different words.***
9. Turned aside from Truth is he who will be led astray [***in future***]***.***

The insensible may utter different words at different times. Thus, there is one Straight Path, but ways leading people astray are large in number. There is one true belief, but untrue ones are many. The blessed Verses in question like the preceding ones open with an oath and treat of disbelievers' differences regarding Resurrection and different questions including the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) and Divine Unity.

The blessed Verse 7 reads:

"By the heaven abounding in beauteous paths and beauties."

Different senses have been presented by lexicographers for the Arabic plural noun hubuk (singular form: hibak) including: paths and meanders as traces of wind blowing onto desert sand, water surface, or clouds. It is also applied to 'curly hair' and at times to 'beauty, adornment, orderly shape.'

The word derives from the root h-b-k denoting 'bind, tighten.'[2] All the different senses traces back to one single sense: the beauteous folds and meanders visible in waves, clouds, desert sand hills, and hair.

Application of the original sense of the word to the heaven is owing to either the different forms of the masses of planets and constellations or the fascinating meanders visible in clouds which are at times so appealing that one may be mesmerized by them for a while. It may also reflect the immense masses of galaxies appearing in spheres like curls of hair.

The fascinating pictures taken by scientists by means of telescopes remind one of curly hair. Thus, the Holy Qur'an swears by the heaven and immense galaxies still unperceived by the sharp vision of science.

Taking into account the fact that these senses are by no means inconsistent may reflect that they are all intended in the oath, as it is attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[3]:

"And indeed We have created above you seven heavens [***one above the other***]***"***

which makes a reference to the multiplicity and variety of the heavens, planets, galaxies, and different

worlds. It is also worthy of note that the root of the word may reflect the consolidation of the heavens and the solid nexus existing amongst planets, like that between the planets of the solar system with the sun.

The apodosis of the oath, namely the object of it, is to be found in the blessed Verse 8:

"Surely, you are [***perplexed***] ***in having different words."***

It is saying that your words are contradictions in terms demonstrating the unfoundedness of your words. Regarding Resurrection you say at times:

"We never believe that decayed bones may ever be rejuvenated."

At times you say:

"We are in doubt concerning Resurrection."

You sometimes say:

"Bring our ancestors to bear witness that Resurrection will follow death so that we may acknowledge your claims."

Regarding the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) you sometimes say that he is a lunatic, a poet, a sorcerer. At times you say that a teacher teaches him these words. At times, you call the Holy Qur'an 'ancient legends' (asatir al-awwalin), poetry, magic, and lie.

By the meanders of the heavens! Your words abound in contradictions in terms. Had you had any reasonable argument to produce, you would have presented the same argument instead of searching different unfounded arguments each and every day. Such expression is actually an argument negating disbelievers' unfounded claims regarding Divine Unity, Resurrection, the Noble Prophet of Islam (S), and the Holy Qur'an.

It is worthy of note that based on the contextual meaning of the following blessed Verses, the focal point of these blessed Verses is the question of Resurrection.

The blessed Verse 9 treats of the reasons behind deviation from the true path, saying:

"Those who refuse to acknowledge sound arguments and submit to reason deviate from belief in Resurrection; though the arguments substantiating life after death are evident."

(***"Turned aside from Truth is he who will be led astray*** [***in future***]*"*).

It is worthy of note that the Verse in expressed in brief as the literal translation of the same is:

"Turned aside from Truth is he who will be led astray [***in future***]*."*

The Arabic word ufik originally designates ‘turn away from’; consequently, it is applied to ‘lie’ which entails deviation from the Straight Path. Likewise the Arabic plural noun mu’tafikat is applied to different winds. Taking into account the point that the preceding Verses treated of Resurrection, it may be said that the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse makes a reference to deviation from such belief.

Since the preceding blessed Verses dealt with disbelievers’ contradictory statements, it is evident that those deviating from reason and clear arguments are being meant herein. Thus, the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse refers to those who deviate from belief in Resurrection owing to turning away from logical arguments and the logic aiming at seeking truth.

However, deviation may reflect refusing to acknowledge the Truth including the Holy Qur’an, Divine Unity, the Noble Prophet’s (S) Prophethood, Resurrection, and Divine Guardianship of the Infallible Imams (as) reflected in a number of traditions. The Question of Resurrection is indisputably involved herein.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 10-11

قُتِلَ الْخَرَّاصُونَ

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ سَاهُونَ

10. Down with the liars [***talking of the Holy Qur’an and Resurrection without relying on sound arguments***]
11. Who are immersed in heedlessness and neglect.

The Arabic word kharras

(***“liar”***)

derives from kh-r-s denoting ‘form a conjecture, tell untruth.’ The Arabic word ghamra designates ‘abundant bottomless water,’ but it ad hoc connotes profound ignorance encompassing man. Some people are in the habit of gossiping based on their surmises and conjectures aiming to create doubts in others.

Gossips are usually commissioned by the enemy, created by hypocrites, and acknowledged by simpletons. At any rate, the blessing Verse in question is saying: “May the liars die.” The sentence is a curse to those liars who deserve to die since their non-existence is better than their existence.

The blessed Verse 11 is a depiction of such liars, saying that they are immersed in neglect and heedlessness. The Arabic word sahun derives from s-h-w denoting ‘to be inattentive, to neglect; though

it ad hoc connotes those who are immersed in ignorance and produce unfounded words and excuses each and every day in order to evade the Path of Truth.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 12-14

يَسْأَلُونَ أَيَّانَ يَوْمُ الدِّينِ

يَوْمَ هُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ يُفْتَنُونَ

ذُوقُوا فِتْنَتَكُمْ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنتُم بِهِ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ

12. They inquire: "When will be the Day of Recompense?"
13. [***It shall be***] ***a Day when they will be burned over the Fire!***
14. [***It is said unto them:***] ***"Taste you your trial! This is what you used to demand to be hastened!"***

Inquiry aiming at understanding entails no problem, but it is blameworthy if the same aims at finding faults and denial of truth;

(***"They inquire: "When will be the Day of Recompense?"***).

The antecedent of

'they'

in

"They inquire"

are those immersed in ignorance as mentioned in the preceding blessed Verses; those who have turned away from the Path of Truth and inquire from believers regarding the Day of Recompense sworn by in the Holy Qur'an as well as the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) in order to deride them.

"A Day when they will be burned over the Fire"

is the reply to their question whose predicate is omitted, namely the Day of Recompense is the Day on which you shall be burned and chastised and the angel responsible for inflicting chastisement upon disbelievers in Hell says unto them: "Taste your trial!"

This is same Day promised by the Prophets warning disbelievers against the pain and torment in the Hereafter; but disbelievers refused to believe them; instead they hastened out of denial asking about the

time of Recompense.

Now, they may taste their trial and acknowledge the truth thereof. It is also worthy of note that the Arabic word fitna is used originally in the sense of melting gold and silver in the crucible to separate pure gold or silver from impurities, though the world ad hoc signifies the severity of disbelievers’ torment.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 15-16

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ

آخِذِينَ مَا آتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ

15. Indeed, the God fearing shall be in the midst of Gardens and [beside] Springs,
16. Receiving what their Lord has granted them. Indeed, they were formerly the good-doers [in this world].

Turning away from transient pleasures entails permanent ones. Besides gardens and springs, the people of Paradise receive new Bounties at any moment. It is worthy of note that what they receive befits Divine Lordship and all Bounties in Paradise will be granted to the God fearing by the Sacred Essence of God Almighty.

Following a depiction of those who have immersed in the mire of ignorance and the manner of their dire fate, God Almighty depicts the state of the good-doers and the Bounties and Blessings granted to them. The Qur’anic depiction of the state of disbelievers and evil doers and their dire fate follows precedes or follows the state of believers and the God fearing.

We expect the same since God Almighty has glorified His Messenger (S) and called him ‘bearer of glad tidings and a warner.’ Furthermore, the perfect man is supposed to know God Almighty by all Divine Beauteous Names and be aware that He bestows many Blessings at the time of Mercy and is severely Revengeful at the time of Wrath.

Thus, the God fearing are supposed to be in a state between fear and hope at all times, rather than be proud of their piety, worship, and fearing God Almighty or lose their hope of Divine Mercy. As a consequence, the Qur’anic Verses treat of the state of disbelievers and their torments inflicted upon them in Hellfire preceding or following a treatment of the state of the God fearing and those obedient to Divine Commands deriving pleasure in Gardens and beside Springs in Paradise.

The Arabic word jannat the plural form of jannat which may not only allude to the point that they will enjoy different kinds of Paradise but it may also make a reference to the point that they will enjoy

physical and spiritual Paradises and Springs without bounds. The Arabic word ‘uyun is the plural form of ‘ayn which may refer to different kinds of Springs to be enjoyed by the God fearing.

The blessed Verse proceeds with some of the attributes of the God fearing including the receipt of what their Lord bestows upon them out of Mercy and Graciousness;

(***“Receiving what their Lord has granted them”***).

The relative ma (“that, what”) in

“what their Lord has granted them” (***ma ata-hum rabbu-hum***)

designates generality connoting innumerable Bounties. It may also allude to their exalted state, namely they are so close to God Almighty that they immediately receive Bounties from Him.

A similar motif is attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur’an4 that it seems as if the hand of the poor is likened to His:

“Know they not that Allah Accepts repentance from His servants and takes the alms and that Allah Alone is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, the Most Gracious?”

The blessed Verse makes a reference to the exalted state of the God fearing by which they receive Divine Bounties from His Hand; in other words, they heavenly soul shall receive many a Bounty from its Origin.

The clause

“Indeed, they were formerly the good-doers [***in this world***]***”***

refers to the point that the God fearing believers attained to such exalted state of receiving Divine Bounties immediately from the Origin of Such Bounties owing to their piety and fearing God in their mundane life.

Qur’anic exegets maintain that:

“formerly” (***qabla dhalik***)

may refer to mundane life and reflect that the Reward of their doing righteous good deeds is that their pure souls receive Bounties from the Lord and they also receive Divine Blessings in their worldly life.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 17-19

كَانُوا قَلِيلاً مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ

وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ

وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ

17. They used to sleep but little by night.
18. And at dawn, they were invoking [***Allah***] ***for forgiveness.***
19. And in their property there was the right of mendicants and the deprived.

The second attribute of the God fearing is made mention of in the blessed Verse 17, saying:

"They used to sleep but little by night."

The verbal form yahja'un is cognate with huju' ("night's sleep") deriving from the root h-j-'. The blessed Verse may be interpreted in two ways: firstly, the God fearing are awake most of the night and sleep a short time at night; secondly, most of the nights they are awake worshipping God Almighty and few are the nights in which they sleep failing to be awake for the sake of worship.

In this vein, there is a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) concerning the blessed Verse in question according to which he said:

Few are the night in which they sleep without rising [*to worship God Almighty*]*."*5

The blessed Verse 18 enumerates another attribute of the God fearing saying that they invoke God Almighty for forgiveness.

The blessed Verse reflects that istighfar designates asking God Almighty for forgiveness at night has a further merit: despite spending most of the night in worshipping God Almighty and what is desirable to the Divine Legislator (shari'), the God fearing believer whose hear is purified devotes the dawn time to invoking God Almighty, the Oft-Forgiving, for forgiveness.

As some Qur'anic exegets maintain, the blessed Verse refers to the point that the God fearing are supposed to repeatedly invoke God Almighty for forgiveness following their nightly prayers unless they be deceived by formal worship imagining that they have attained to the exalted state of being close to God Almighty consigning to oblivion the Qur'anic Verse:

"Indeed Allah accepts [***prayers***] ***from the God fearing."***

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"The best time for invocation to God Almighty is dawn, since Allah says:

'And at dawn, they were invoking [***Allah***] ***for forgiveness.'"***6

Regarding the blessed Verse in question, he said:

"It refers to invoking God Almighty seventy times for forgiveness in odd (witr) *and night prayers."*[7]

According to a Prophetic tradition quoted in Durr al-Manthur:

"Late night is more desirable to me than early night for night prayers, since God Almighty says:

'The God fearing invoke God Almighty for forgiveness at dawn.'"[8]

It is also narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

"The good-doers who are the people of Paradise invoke God Almighty seventy times for forgiveness in their odd prayers at dawn."[9]

The blessed Verse 19 enumerates another attribute of the God fearing saying that they determine certain portions for the poor in their property thereby they take the poor as their partners in their property. The Arabic word sa'il is applied to a poor man who expresses his poverty asking the rich to provide him with what is due to him. The word mahrum is applied to a gentleman whose continence impedes him from expressing his poverty and dire state.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 20-23

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِّلْمُوقِنِينَ

وَفِي أَنفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ

فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ مِّثْلَ مَا أَنَّكُمْ تَنطِقُونَ

20. And on the earth are signs for those who have faith with certitude.
21. And also in [***the creation of***] ***your ownselves*** [***are Signs of Divine Omnipotence, Grandeur, and Wisdom***]***. Will you not then see*** [***with your inward sight***]***?***
22. And in the heaven is [***the preordainment of***] ***your provision, and that which you are promised.***
23. Then by the Lord of the heaven and the earth, it [***Word of Ours***] ***is the Truth, just as it is the truth that you can speak*** [***in which you entertain no doubt, likewise entertain no doubt concerning Our Words***]***.***

According to the Holy Qur'an preparedness of heart is the prerequisite for finding Guidance and attaining to certitude through Signs of nature, the Book, and the Islamic faith;

(***"And on the earth are signs for those who have faith with certitude"***).

Many a secret lie behind the creation of the earth and that of mankind, including the mass, area, and depth of the earth, mountains and valleys, its distance from the sun and other planets, different motions of the earth, visible and invisible mines, vegetation, water reservoirs, colors, stones, soils, fruits, plants, refinement of the earth and its providing food and other provisions for its inhabitants all of which reflect the Signs of Divine Omnipotence and Wisdom to those seeking certitude.

Different states of the body, from conception onward serve as manifestations of Divine Omnipotence and man's different instincts reflect the signs of His Omniscience and Wisdom as to man's needs. The harmony between physical senses and their lack of consistency with each other, skeleton, nervous, respiratory, and digestion system well as sight, hearing, and defense mechanism are all signs of Divine Omnipotence.

Imam 'Ali (as) says:

"God Almighty created you with hearing and sight; you become happy, angry, hungry, and thirsty."[10]

The certain (mawqinin) are those who have attained the knowledge of certitude ('ilm al-yaqin) through intellectual and narrational arguments and look at the earth in order to increase their certitude and knowledge so that they may perceive the Signs of Divine Attributes of Glory and Beauty.

They are attentive at all times to find Signs of Divine Mercy in all things so that through attentiveness and reflection they may attain to such state thereby they may perceive things as representatives of Divine Attributes and reach from knowledge of certitude to certitude by sight ('ayn al-yaqin).

It is then that they see with their inward eye what is attributed to the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) as saying:

"His Signs are to be seen in all things, reflecting that He is One";

Thus, they may perceive Divine Infinite Mercy in all creatures.

The blessed Verse 21 is addressed to all mankind.

The hamza (the glottal stop) in a-fa-la ("why not") is an interrogative particle connoting censure for those who fail to perceive the Signs of Divine Omnipotence in themselves, nor do they see that whatever exists in macrocosm is an instance existing in human existence, since man is the only creature in him exist all the world of existence and the treasure of Divine Secrets; he is the only representative of Divine Attributes who at times soars in the infinite realm of the world of contingent being through the faculty of

his spiritual soul and he is at times attracted by nature and plunges into the depth of the mire of materiality.

Despite his Divine vicegerency, he has blinded his inward eye and fails to perceive the Signs of the Divine in order to know Him.

Acquisition of the knowledge of the origin and Resurrection is dependent upon knowing one's self. First of all, one is supposed to know one's self in one's own being as one is the Sign of the Existence of God Almighty so that one may acquire knowledge of the origin and Resurrection of one's self as it is reflected in a generally transmitted and accepted (mashhur) tradition narrated from the Noble Prophet of Islam (S):

"One who knows his own self and truth, he has known his Lord."

It is worthy of note that knowing one's self is not solely dependent upon acquisition of knowledge concerning one's body, natural faculties, and genealogy, but one who knows his own self through acquiring knowledge as to his createdness and knowing that he is the manifestation of Divine Existence and Attributes, he may know God Almighty within the limited capacity of his knowledge and existence.

It is narrated from the master of mystics, Imam 'Ali (as), saying:

"Do you imagine that you are but a minute mass? But, macrocosm is encompassed in you."

The blessed Verse 22 is saying that your provision and what is promised to you are in the heaven descending upon the earth through rain, snow, and sunlight thereby vegetation grows on which you feed. What is promised to you has been sent down as Divine Signs.

The word:

***'heaven'* (*sama'*)**

may refer to the celestial realm, namely the world of preordainment and the Preserved Tablet (lawh mahfud) including provision (rizq) preordained for man from the beginning of creation embracing physical and spiritual Bounties and also what is promised to the God fearing from Bounties in Paradise to the exalted states in the Hereafter through Divinely appointed Messengers.

Although the former meaning of provision, namely what constitutes man's sustenance and/or natural requirements, occurs to mind at the first glance, but taking into account the clause

"and what is promised"

with the conjunct 'and' and the following blessed Verse:

"Then by the Lord of the heaven and the earth, it* [*Word of Ours*] *is the Truth, just as it is the truth

that you can speak,"

it becomes evident that the general meaning is intended, since the antecedent of 'it' are seemingly the preceding blessed Verses in which oaths were taken as to the Lord, Distributor, and Organizer of the heaven and the earth. Such attributes were enumerated as belonging to the God fearing for whom states were specified.

It was also mentioned that man's preordained provision and what is promised to them from worldly to otherworldly Bounties are certainly true, like your words of which you are certain. It is worthy of note that it would be unbefitting to swear by the provision prepared for man through rain, snow, and sunlight and thereby attempt to substantiate what is evident by such emphatic oaths.

1. Majma' al-Bayan, the opening of Chapter 51; Thawab al-A'mal apud Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 120.
2. Lisan al-'Arab; Raghib's Mufradat, under h-b-k.
3. 23:17
4. 9:104
5. Usul Kafi, vol. 3, p. 446.
6. Mustadrak, vol. 5, p. 200.
7. Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 130.
8. Durr al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 113.
9. Majma' al-Bayan, under the blessed Verses in question.
10. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn.

Surah al-Dhariyat, Verses 24 - 46

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 24-27

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ

إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَوْمٌ مُنكَرُونَ

فَرَاغَ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ فَجَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِينٍ

فَقَرَّبَهُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ

24. Has the story reached you, of the honored guests of Abraham (as)?
25. When they came in to him and said: "Peace be upon you!" He [Abraham] replied: "Peace be upon you," and said: "You are a people unknown to me."
26. Then he turned to his household secretly and brought out a fattened [roasted] calf.
27. Then placed it before them [noticing that they refrain from eating, he said]: "Will you not eat?"

Bearing the glad tidings of a child to be born to Abraham (as), some angels entered his home, but the Prophet (as) did not know them. However, he invited them to go in and showed his hospitality by preparing food for them. Noticing that they refrained from eating, he was anxious and inquired the reason for their refraining to partake of the food.

Then, they presented themselves to him and enlightened him on their mission. Instances of anthropomorphic angels are attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an, including: descent of Gabriel upon Mary (as), that of Harut and Marut in Solomon's (as) realm, and that of angels upon Abraham (as).

Thus, addressed to the Noble Prophet of Islam (S), the blessed Verses in question say:

"O Muhammad (S)! Are you aware of the story of the Abraham's (as) guests honored by God Almighty?"

A similar Qur'anic instance is attested elsewhere in which God Almighty says of angels:

"But they are honored servants."

The adjective 'honored' may refer to Abraham (as), i.e. he honored the angels by preparing food for them. The manner of expression reflects that the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) had not been aware of the story but he learned the story through Divine Revelation.

The blessed Verse 25 saying:

"When they came in to him"

indicate that they were sent by God Almighty to fulfill two missions: to bear glad tidings to Abraham (as) that God Almighty would grant him a son; they were also sent to afflict the people of Lot (as) with torment.

The blessed Verse 25 is saying that when the angels descended, they greeted with Abraham (as) by saying:

"Peace be upon you."

The angels' greetings may merely serve as asking Divine Mercy for Abraham (as). It may also indicate that they aimed to inform Abraham of their mission as to afflicting the people of Lot (as) with torment and apprise him of his safety and that of his followers.

Replying them by saying:

"Peace be upon you"

he noticed that he did not know them, since he thought that they were human beings and it was his habit to show hospitality to his company.

The blessed Verse 26 says that Abraham (as) went to Sarah and had a fattened calf roasted and brought it to his guests.

Noticing that the guests who appeared like human beings to him refrain from eating, he inquired with surprise:

"Will you not eat?"

Since they were unknown to him and besides they declined his offer to partake of the food, he was afraid of them lest they might be his enemies suspecting some malintention against him.

Thus, the angels said unto him:

"Fear not. We are here to bear you glad tidings rather than harm you."

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 28-30

فَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِغُلَامٍ عَلِيمٍ

فَأَقْبَلَتِ امْرَأَتُهُ فِي صَرَّةٍ فَصَكَّتْ وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ

قَالُوا كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ

28. Then he entertained fear of them [when they ate not]. They said: "Fear not [since we are God's angels]." And they bore him glad tidings of a son having knowledge.
29. Then his wife [hearing the glad tidings of a son] came forward with a loud voice: She smote her face and said: "[How] a barren old woman [may conceive a child]!"
30. They [the angels] said [unto him]: "Thus says your Lord. Indeed, He is the All-Wise, the Omniscient."

The Arabic word awjas ("apprehensive, entertaining fear, having presentiments") derives from w-j-s ("be apprehensive, have presentiments, be seized by fear"). The Arabic noun Khiyfa ("fear, dread") derives from the root kh-'-f ("fear, dread") and its nunnation (tanwin) indicates diversification (tanwi') connoting

that Abraham was seized by a kind of fear.

The blessed Verse is saying that the angels introduced themselves to Abraham saying that they were not human beings in need of partaking food, but they were angels sent on a mission by God Almighty to inform him of a son who would be quite knowledgeable and wise.

The son mentioned herein may refer to Ishmael (Isma'il) born to Hagar (Hajar). The following blessed Verse indicates that the son mentioned in the blessed Verse 28 was Isaac (Ishaq) born to Sarah (Sara).

The blessed Verse 29 is saying that upon hearing such glad tiding, Sarah, Abraham's (as) wife, hastened toward the room with a loud voice (fi sarratin) saying:

"How may I conceive a child when I am an old [***barren***] ***woman."***

Qur'anic exegets maintain that Sarah and Abraham (as) were ninety five and one hundred and ninety years of age respectively at the time.

The blessed Verse 30 is saying that replying to Abraham's (as) wife seized by great surprise and fear, the angles said:

"Thus says your Lord. Indeed, He is the All-Wise, the Omniscient,"

i.e. he is All-Aware of all good and evil things. The angels might have intended to say that they were on a mission from God Almighty to bear them glad tidings rather than saying something of their own, aiming to make her understand that God Almighty willed to reflect his Omnipotence to the world that whatever He willed would be realized and there was nothing impossible against His Omnipotence.

Thus, the angels said:

"He is the All-Wise, the Omniscient."

The emphatic conjunction inna ("behold, verily, truly") indicates that whatever God Almighty wills is based upon His Wisdom and Omniscience as to improving the affairs and vanity may never penetrate his Sacred Divine Presence.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 31-34

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ

قَالُوا إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمٍ مُجْرِمِينَ

لِنُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِّن طِينٍ

مُسَوَّمَةً عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُسْرِفِينَ

31. [***Abraham***] ***said: "Then for what purpose you have come, O Messengers?"***
32. They said: "We have been sent to a wrong-doing people,
33. To send down upon them stones of baked clay [***for their perdition***]***.***
34. [***Stones***] ***marked by your Lord for*** [***the perdition of***] ***transgressors of Divine Bounds.***

The Arabic word khatb designates 'significant affair or concern' and musawwama denotes 'marked.' Lot (as) was a relative of Abraham (as) who propagated monotheism in the region of Sodom, Jordan, at the time. Lot's (as) people were promiscuous and also sodomizers inattentive to Prophet Lot's (as) warnings. As a consequence, God Almighty caused the destruction of their region and their story is mentioned in Chapters 7, 11, 15, and 29.

The blessed Verse 31 is saying that when Prophet Abraham (as) recognized the angels through the light of his heart and learned that they were on a significant mission, he inquired about their purpose.

The blessed Verse 32 is saying that since Prophet Abraham (as) occupied a place higher than that of Prophet Lot (as), the former was informed by God Almighty through His angels that He intended to cause the destruction of the people of Lot (as) inhabiting Mu'tafaka turning a deaf ear to Lot's warnings against their committing such obscene acts.

Thus they brought Divine torment upon themselves. Replying to Prophet Abraham (as), the angels informed him that they had been sent by God Almighty to send down upon them stones of baked clay.

The blessed Verse 34 is saying:

"O Muhammad (S)! Those stones marked by your Lord are for those people leading their lives in pleasures of the flesh, disbelief, and sin."

The blessed Verse may make a reference to the point that the recompense of any act is to be consistent with it (jaza'an wifaqan). Since the promiscuous deeds of the people of Mu'tafaka were the lowliest acts against the laws of nature and human practice, but quite bestial, their chastisement had to be inflicted upon them by means of the lowliest of things, namely baked clay.

It may be for the same reason that the punishment for sodomy is being stoned so that the sodomizer tastes the most excruciating torment in this world and others may take a lesson and refrain from committing such act of obscenity.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 35-37

فَأَخْرَجْنَا مَن كَانَ فِيهَا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

فَمَا وَجَدْنَا فِيهَا غَيْرَ بَيْتٍ مِّنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

وَتَرَكْنَا فِيهَا آيَةً لِّلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ

35. Therefore, We brought out from therein all the believers.
36. But We found not there any household of the Muslims except one.
37. And We have left there [***nothing but***] ***a sign for*** [***warning***] ***those who fear the excruciating torment.***

Corruption at times disseminates to such an extent that an honored Prophet like Lot (as) is backed by one single household, to be more precise by his household excluding his wife;

(***"any household of the Muslims except one"***).

As reflected in the blessed Verses in question, the angels said unto Prophet Abraham (as) who was concerned about Prophet Lot (as), his nephew, that they had expelled all disbelievers from the city of Mu'tafaka but one home belonging to the Muslims that stayed intact by Divine torment and the home belonged to Prophet Lot (as) and his two daughters.

It is said that Prophet Lot (as) propagated monotheism for twenty one years, but only one person believed him. Thus, the inhabitants of the city deserved Divine Chastisement since it is reflected that they did not deserved Divine Guidance. Had some of them had faith, they would have remained unharmed.

The blessed verse 37 is saying that God Almighty left the city in ruins so that those who fear excruciating torment might take a lesson. The blessed Verse reflects that the Prophets were able to lead those unto Guidance who were prepared to have faith and believe in God Almighty believing that He is Most Gracious at the time of Mercy and Most Revengeful at the time of being Wrathful.

Noticing the traces of Divine torment descended upon former peoples, their faith increases and fear of God Almighty overwhelms them, but those who are frail of faith are not prepared to receive Guidance, like the pretending Muslims of our time who take all disasters inflicted upon them to be natural phenomena and do not regard themselves to be blameworthy deserving such afflictions.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 38-40

وَفِي مُوسَى إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ

فَتَوَلَّى بِرُكْنِهِ وَقَالَ سَاحِرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ

فَأَخَذْنَاهُ وَجُنُودَهُ فَنَبَذْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ

38. And in [the story of] Moses [AS there is a sign and a lesson to take], when We sent him to Pharaoh with a manifest authority.
39. But [Pharaoh] turned away relying on his might and hosts, saying: "[He is] a sorcerer, or a madman."
40. Therefore, We took him and his hosts [by force] and dumped them into the sea for he was blameworthy.

The phrase:

"manifest authority"

is a clear evidence for the possibility of entering into discussions with others and producing one's logical arguments.

The verbal form nabadhnahum ["we dumped them") deriving from the root n-b-dh is employed in the sense of dump unworthy and insignificant objects. The Arabic word mulim deriving from l-'-m ("censure, blame, and rebuke") denotes 'blameworthy.' The word rukn ad hoc connotes Pharaoh's might, holsts, property, authority, and propaganda, intending to say that Pharaoh relying on his might, confronted Moses (as)and refused to acknowledge his Prophetic Call.

Alluding to the previous blessed Verses, those in question proceeds with further warning following the stories of Abraham (as) and the torment sent down on the people of Lot (as).

Opening with the story of the story of Moses (as) and Pharaoh, they say that God Almighty sent Moses (as) with miracles including his walking stick and the shining hand as manifest Divine Signs, relying on his might, sovereignty, and the large number of adherents, Pharaoh turned away from the miracles of Moses (as) and showed indifference, since he claimed godhead and forced people to worship him.

However, might have inwardly acknowledged Moses' (as) Prophetic Call through Divine Signs, but he was deceived by his love for sovereignty and the large number of his courtiers and servants thereby he refrained from believing in monotheism.

As a consequence, he attributed sorcery and lunacy to the Prophet (as) attempting at deceiving people by claiming that Moses was either a sorcerer for transforming a walking stick into a dragon or a lunatic for his Call to worshipping the invisible God.

Since Pharaoh went to the extreme in obstinacy and confrontation with Moses (as), believed in his godhead, impeded his kith and kin from believing in God Almighty, and persecuted Prophet Moses (as) and believers in monotheism, God Almighty gave him the ultimatum, afflicted him and his hosts with torments and drowned them in the Nile.

Pharaoh blamed himself at that time as it is reflected elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[1]:

"And We took the Children of Israel across the sea and Pharaoh with his hosts followed them in oppression and enmity till when drowning overtook him, he said: 'I believe that none has the right to be worshipped but He [Allah] in Whom the Children of Israel believe and I am one of the Muslims.'"

It was said unto him:

"Now that you are close to perdition, your belief is of no avail and may not rescue you from drowning, since you refused to believe in God but waxed corruption in the earth."

When disbelievers and transgressors of Divine Bounds taste the torment and when they notice the evil consequences of their vicious deeds in mortal throes, their repentance will be of no avail, since his potential for turning away from denial of God Almighty and turning toward Him has come to an end and his repentance will be in vain; as the old saying goes:

"An ounce of precaution is better than a pound of cure."

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 41-42

وَفِي عَادٍ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّيحَ الْعَقِيمَ

مَا تَذَرُ مِن شَيْءٍ أَتَتْ عَلَيْهِ إِلاَّ جَعَلَتْهُ كَالرَّمِيمِ

41. And [there are lessons and Signs] in [the story of] 'Ad when We sent against them the barren [destructive] wind;
42. It [the wind] spared nothing that it touched, but blew it into broken spreads of rotten ruins.

Prophet Hod (Hud AS) was sent by God Almighty to call his people to monotheism. Despite his warnings they did not pay any heed but paved the path for sending down Divine torment. Winds are sometimes

rejuvenating but they may be barren and destructive at times. The Arabic phrase al-rih al-'aqim designates 'destructive wind' sent as a torment against the people of 'Ad.

It was so scorching and poisoning that it destroyed all men, animals, and plants on its way. The word ramim designates 'rotten, decaying' and tarmim denotes 'restoration of decay.' Despite their great physical strength, power, and high stature, the destructive wind shattered them like rotten bones.

The blessed twain Verses allude to the torment sent against the people of 'Ad who despite their strong body and high stature, their strength, power, and might could not keep them from being afflicted with the Divine torment, the barren, namely destructive wind, levitating them off the ground and dumped them onto the land thus turning them into rotten bones.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 43-45

وَفِي ثَمُودَ إِذْ قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَمَتَّعُوا حَتَّى حِينٍ

فَعَتَوْا عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ وَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ

فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا مِن قِيَامٍ وَمَا كَانُوا مُنتَصِرِينَ

43. And in [***the story of***] ***Thamud*** [***there are Signs and lessons***]***, when they were told: "Enjoy yourselves for a while*** [***in your lifetime***]***!"***
44. But they insolently defied the Command of their Lord, so the Sa'iqa [***awe inspiring cry***] ***overtook them while they were beholding.***
45. Then they were unable to rise up, nor could they ask for help.

Prophet Salih (as), the Prophet of the people of Thamud, brought out a camel at the request of his people and ordered them to refrain from harming the camel, but they killed it and denied his Prophetic Call.

The Arabic phrase hata hin indicates the three day respite granted them so that they may regret their evil deed and repent, but they kept on committing sins and succumbed to Divine Chastisement after three days, as it is reflected elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an2:

"So he said: 'enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days.'"

Thus, recounting the story of the people of 'Ad and their affliction with Divine torment and the icy gale (sarsar) owing to their denial of the Prophetic Call is followed by an allusion to the torment inflicted upon the people of Thamud who, having killed Salih's (as) she-camel, were granted a three day respite so

that they may compensate for their past evil deeds, but they disobeyed Divine Command and returned to their vicious deeds. As a consequence, the destructive torment was sent down upon them and caused their perdition.

It is said that the torment was Gabriel's awe-inspiring shout as a consequence of which they lost consciousness and perished

"while they were beholding."

It is also said that a group of them, Amalekites ('amaliqa), were out of town on those three days and were able to hear the awe-inspiring shout and the inhabitants' loss of consciousness; however, the following blessed Verse:

(*"Then they were unable to rise up, nor could they ask for help"*)

reveals that the people of Thamud did not die right after the awe-inspiring shout, but lost consciousness and lost their lives later on.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verse 46

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِّن قَبْلُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ

46.** [**And were**] **the people of Noah** [**AS**] **before them** [**whom We destroyed**]. **Indeed, they were a people transgressing Divine Bounds.

The Noble Prophet of Islam (S) and Muslims were able to take a lesson out of the story of Noah's (as) people whom Noah called to monotheism for a thousand years. The common run of people at times incline toward committing sins and pave the ground for Divine torment.

The opening conjunction particle 'and' connects the blessed Verse in question with the preceding ones, as per which the blessed Verse is saying that God Almighty caused the destruction of the people of Noah prior to those of 'Ad and Thamud, since they were wrong-doers who were totally sinners disobedient to Divine Command.

They disbelieved Prophetic Calls as a consequence of which they were given the ultimatum and were afflicted with the recompense of their vicious deeds – the excruciating torment. These blessed Verses treat of five Prophets (as) and their peoples and the torments inflicted upon the disobedient peoples.

The reminder serves two purposes: firstly, warning others against disobedience to God Almighty which necessitates Divine torments illustrating those in store in the Hereafter and secondly, consoling the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) encouraging him to entertain no sorrow because of some people attributing

unbefitting qualities to him including sorcery and madness.

He is thereby reminded that people have been the same at different times and those seeking truth are very few in number. Former Prophets (as) were patient against disbelievers' persecutions and persevered firmly in propagating their Prophetic Missions. The Noble Prophet of Islam (S) is encouraged to persevere firmly in the Cause of Allah like former Prophets (as).

The same motif is attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an, including 46:35:

"Therefore, be patient [***O Muhammad*** (***S***)***!***] ***as did the Prophets of strong will*** (***ulu al-'azm***)***."***

These blessed Verses encouraging him to be patient reflect that the Noble Prophet (S) suffered many abuses by the disbelievers from Quraysh and he was quite anxious because of their denial of his Prophetic Call.

1. 10:90
2. 11:65

Surah al-Dhariyat, Verses 47 - 60

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 47-48

وَالسَّمَاءِ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ

وَالْأَرْضَ فَرَشْنَاهَا فَنِعْمَ الْمَاهِدُونَ

47. With [***indescribable***] ***power did We construct the heaven. Indeed, We are Able to extend the vastness of space thereof.***
48. And We have spread out the earth: how Excellent Spreader are We!

The Arabic word ayd may ad hoc be employed either as the plural form of yad ("hand"), as in

"Or have they hands wherewith they hold?"1***,***

or as an infinitive designating 'support', as the derivatives of the root '-y-d ("support, back") attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an, including:

"He it is Who has supported you with His Help and with the believers"2***.***

The Arabic words farsh and mahd designate spreading something for taking rest. Following recounting the story of the Prophets and their peoples and nations, the blessed Verses in question treat of Divine Omnipotence, Beneficence, and Creativity reminding people to behold the manner through which God Almighty, unaided and without time created the heavens ex nihilo, established, and spread it out.

Only God Almighty, the Creator and the Provider, is Aware of the vastness of the heavens and the number of spheres, planets, and galaxies and despite the strenuous efforts made by astronomers, they have failed to gain full acquaintance with the number of all the stars and planets.

The number is seemingly infinite. Human knowledge is such that the more it is gained, it may still advance, since Divine Emanation is Infinite; consequently, the more human knowledge advances, it becomes finite against Divine Omnipotence.

The blessed Verse 48 proceeds with a treatment of Divine Favors bestowed upon mankind. God Almighty makes mention of His Omniscience and Omnipotence saying

that He spread out the earth like the carpet beneath man's feet and made it an abode for him.

The Arabic word mahd denotes cradle attested in 19:29, when to remove the unfounded accusations, Mary (as) was asked to point to baby Jesus (as) so that they may ask him and they replied:

"How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?"

God Almighty likens the earth to a cradle since the earth is in permanent motion like the cradle moving for pacifying the child.

Ptolemaic astronomers maintained that the sun circles around the earth once in twenty four hours as a result of which a different exegesis was provided for the blessed Verse in question, but it is proved by modern scientists that the earth circles around the sun in twenty four hours and the blessed Verse 48 saying:

"How Excellent Spreader are We!"

is substantiated by modern discoveries and is regarded as one of Qur'anic miracles.

Two quite precise points may be derived from the blessed Verse concerning the creation of the earth.

The first clause:

"And We have spread out the earth"

likens the earth to a carpet prepared and spread for rest.

The second clause:

“How Excellent Spreader are We!”

indicates that the earth which serves as a carpet on which one may rest is like a cradle moving permanently. The beauty of expression lies in the point that despite its permanent motion, the earth likened to a carpet on which one may rest and its motion is not tangible.

God Almighty glorifies Himself herein and concerning Creation, the Creator and the Provider of the world says that He has created the world in the best manner. In other words, the expression “how Excellent Spreader are We!” is a delicate one reflecting that God Almighty prepared the earth with all the means of rest for the life of mankind. The Arabic word mahid is a cognate of mahd and the latter is applied to cradle or any place prepared for rest.

Such place is supposed to be quiet, safe, and comfortable and all these conditions are applicable to the earth. On the one hand, by Divine Command stones are softened and pulverized and on the other, rigidity of mountains and the crust of the earth make it resistant against the pressure caused by the ebb and flow; on the other hand, the atmosphere encompassing the earth preserves the solar heat blanketing the widespread bed shielding it against collision of meteorites burning them into ashes.

Thus, all the means of welfare has been Divinely prepared for human comfort on the globe.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verse 49

وَمِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

***49. And of everything We have created pairs that you may remember** [**and take lessons**].*

The law of parity predominates all things – generation and continuity of life spring from parity. The blessed Verse in question is saying that pairs have been created for each species of creatures forming pairs.

“Of everything”

designates generality including all species of creatures.

Male and female pairs of mankind, animals, and their species are not solely intended by

“of everything”

as some people might have surmised, but it encompasses all particles and contingent existent beings. It is even a proven fact that the constituent elements, termed prime matter (madat al-mawad) or element consists of two constituents at times termed positive and negative charges, male and female, and/or energy and matter. In short, the blessed Verse is saying that all contingent existent beings are

composite consisting of two things.

Unity solely belongs to the Divine Essence of God Almighty Who is Free from parity, elements, or constituents and He is One in His Essence, to His Essence, and in His Essence:

(***"There is no god but Allah"***).

The blessed Verse indicates that all contingent existent beings consist of constituent elements and any composite being requires a maker; likewise, pairs are in need of each other. Thus, contingent existent beings require the Necessary Being Whose Sacred Presence is devoid of composition, mate, partner, and equal. He is not in need of others in terms of Essence nor is He in need of aids in terms of Acts.

Furthermore, the blessed Qur'anic Verse in question says

"of all things,"

namely "of all existent beings" which may refer to the fact that all things in the world consist of negative and positive particles. Today, it is a proven fact that atoms consist of different particles including electrons, elementary particles with negative charge, and protons, those with positive charge.

It is worthy of note that the dependent clause:

"that you may remember [***and take lessons***]***"***

makes a reference to the point that parity, multiplicity, and duality in all things in the world remind man of the point that the Creator of the world is One, since duality is one of the characteristics of created beings.[3]

Surah al-Dhariyat – Verses 50-51

فَفِرُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ إِنِّي لَكُم مِّنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا آخَرَ إِنِّي لَكُم مِّنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ

50. Therefore, flee to Allah. Indeed, I am a plain warner to you from Him.
51. And associate not any other object of worship along with Allah. Indeed, I am a plain warner to you from Him.

The phrase:

"plain warner"

(nadhir mubin) is repeated twice in these two blessed Verses.

Other instances, including;

“plain Book”

(kitab mubin)4,

“plain Message”

(balagh mubin)5,

“plain Arabic”

(‘Arabi mubin6) all bear witness to the clarity of Divine Message and Word and the Prophets’ warning.

It is worthy of note that fleeing toward God Almighty is on a par with fleeing from shadows to light, ignorance to knowledge, anxiety to security, superstitions to truth, discord to unity, polytheism to monotheism, and sin to piety and fearing God Almighty. Imam Baqir (as) regards pilgrimage7 to Mecca as an instance of fleeing toward God Almighty.

In the blessed Verse 50 as in some other Qur’anic Verses, God Almighty commands His Messenger (S) to proclaim that he is sent on a Mission by God Almighty to warn people against obedience to concupiscent desires and satanic deceits by the jinn and men surrounding their hearts placing them in the multiplicities of the world of phenomena and deliver them from the ruses of concupiscence through enlightening them on the manner of fleeing from them such that they may not fall prey to their deception but be able to draw a distinction between the path to deliverance and that to error and thereby rest in safety free from perils.

In other words, the metaphorical expression ‘flee employed ad hoc is one of interest and delicacy, since ‘flee’ is commonly to instances when man is confronted with an awe-inspiring being or incident on the one side and he is aware of a place of refuge somewhere on the other; as a consequence of which he flees the place of incident and turns toward safe haven.

The blessed Verse in question is asking men to escape polytheism and idolatry as terrible belief and turn to monotheism as a safe haven. Escape Divine torment and turn toward His Mercy. Escape disobedience to God Almighty and turn to repentance. In short, escape evils, vices, disbelief, shadows of ignorance, and everlasting torment and find a safe haven in Divine Mercy and everlasting bliss and happiness.

The blessed Verse 52 is asking people to refrain from associating false gods as objects of worship with the One God. The Noble Prophet of Islam (S) is sent unto mankind by God Almighty to warn them against disobedience to Him and manifest the path to obedience to Him.

Treating the manner of escape the multiplicities of contingent existent beings toward Divine Unity, the blessed Verse is saying that the first path to be opted by believers is to refrain from associating false gods with the One God and turn toward Him wholeheartedly. Then, they are asked to acknowledge and believe in the Prophet Call of the Messenger of Allah (S).

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 52-55

كَذَلِكَ مَا أَتَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلاَّ قَالُوا سَاحِرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ

أَتَوَاصَوْا بِهِ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَمَا أَنتَ بِمَلُومٍ

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَى تَنفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

52. [O Muhammad (S)!] Likewise [your Prophethood was denied], no Messenger came to those before them but they said: "[He is] a sorcerer or a madman!"
53. Have they [former people denying Prophetic Calls] transmitted this saying to these [polytheists to confront the Prophets likewise]? Nay, they are themselves a people disobedient [to God Almighty].
54. So turn away from them, you are not to be blamed.
55. And remind [people], for indeed, the reminding profits the believers.

The blessed Verse 52 concludes the material treated in the preceding Verses and is a consolation to the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) suggesting that if Meccan polytheists confront you likewise, he is to know that former Prophets were confronted in like manner. Since the Noble Prophet (S) fulfilled his Prophetic Mission and gave people the ultimatum on behalf of God Almighty, the Noble Prophet's (S) turning away from disbelievers and his refraining from engaging in disputes with them entails no censure.

The blessed Verses in question commands believers to turn away from disobedient disbelievers and also remind the believers so as to impede the false conception that disbelievers are solely in need of being reminded;

(***"then turn away"***

and

"remind").

Hearing entails benefits which may not be found in knowing. The sincerity and the manner of expression of the speaker may better impress the audience. Thus, the Noble Prophet (S) was commanded to remind the believers at all times.

The blessed Verse 52 is saying that thus were the people as mentioned in the preceding Verses who called all Prophets sent to guide their peoples as sorcerers or madmen. It becomes evident that Prophets were sent to guide peoples at different times in different regions since God Almighty gives ultimatum to all peoples.

According to tradition sources, the number of Prophets stands at one hundred and twenty four thousand. The false attributions to the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) were not unprecedented since all Prophets were called sorcerers and madmen by disbelievers.

Addressed to the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) the blessed Verses 53 and 54 ask whether former peoples had suggested their successors to maintain unanimity in their unfounded attributions of sorcery and madness to Prophets. Then the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) is suggested to turn away from them since he fulfilled his Prophetic Mission and is not to be censured by God Almighty.

The blessed Verse 55 is suggesting the Noble Prophet (S) to turn away from disbelievers' unfounded attributions springing from their obstinacy and arrogance and remind the believers since they may benefit from reminder and admonition and their faith will be further consolidated, since warning them against Divine Omnipotence and Grandeur at times and talk about His Mercy, Forgiving, and Graciousness in order to encourage them to set their hopes on him entails profits for them.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 56-58

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلاّ لِيَعْبُدُونِ

مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَن يُطْعِمُونِ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ

56. And I created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me.
57. I seek not any provision from them nor do I ask that they should feed Me.
58. Indeed, Allah is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, the Most Strong.

The blessed Verse 56 is saying that God Almighty did not create jinn and mankind but for being

worshipped and glorified by them. The l– in li–ya‘budun (“in order to worship”) is employed in the dative case designating purpose. The contextual meaning of the blessed Verse is that the purpose behind the creation of jinn and mankind is that they worship God Almighty.

According to lexicographical sources, ‘servantship’ (‘ubudiyya) designates the highest state of humbleness against the object of worship supposed to have granted Infinite Bounties and Blessings and He is solely God Almighty. Thus, ‘servantship’ is the zenith of human perfection and his closeness to God Almighty. It is the highest state of submission to Divine Pure Essence. It is unconditional obedience to God Almighty in all respects.

Finally, perfect servantship is that man does not entertain any thoughts other than those set upon absolute perfection, set foot on the Path toward Him, and consign to oblivion everything, even one’s self, except Him! This is the final goal of human creation set as an ordeal by God for whose attainment man is provided with knowledge the final goal of which is to be immersed in the ocean of Divine Mercy.

Thus, servants need to know the Divine Essence as the Source of all perfect qualities, adapt themselves with the same, and avail themselves of whose light such that sparks of the attributes of Divine Perfection and Majesty may sparkle in their souls, since perfection and closeness to God Almighty are not possible unless one embarks upon assumption of dominical traits and such assumption is subsidiary to acquisition of knowledge.

In this vein, a tradition is narrated from Imam Husayn (as), saying:

“God did not create mankind except for acquisition of knowledge of Him and when they acquired the knowledge, they worship Him; whoever worships him is needless of serving other objects of worship.”[8]

According to a Divine Tradition:

“I was a Secret Treasure, but I intended to be known. I created beings to be known.”[9]

The two traditions designate that the world of existence was created so that God Almighty might be known and such knowledge entails benefits for creatures rather than for Divine Needless Essence. It also reflects that Divine Emanation resembles His other Attributes bestowing Emanations to inferior creatures.

It is in this light and Mujahid and some other Qur’anic exegets interpret:

“they should worship”

to ‘they should know,’ namely God Almighty did not create jinn and mankind except for their acquisition of knowledge of God Almighty and the Divine Tradition;

“I was a Secret Treasure”

substantiates the interpretation in question, since it goes without saying that worshipping and glorification of God Almighty without knowledge entails no consequences and one who does not know the object of worship and glorification may not embark upon the latter.

Thus, the final purpose of creation of jinn and mankind is that they may acquire knowledge of Divine Essence of Unity. God Almighty created jinn and mankind with all His Most Beauteous and Majestic Attributes so that He may be known and their worship and glorification spring from acquisition of knowledge regarding all Divine Attributes, Most Beauteous Names, and Omnipotence.

The blessed Verses 57 and 58 are saying that one may not imagine that God Almighty is in need of the worship and deeds of jinn and mankind and thereby attain to perfection, since He expects neither provision nor food from creatures as He is the Needless Creator and all creatures are in need of Him, requiring the Absolute Provider to bestow continuity of existence and provision upon them.

Allah is All-Mighty, Omnipotent, All-Dominating, and All-Subduing. All creatures are in need of His Grandeur and Lordship but He is Needless of others by His Essence.

Surah al-Dhariyat - Verses 59-60

فَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ذَنُوبًا مِّثْلَ ذَنُوبِ أَصْحَابِهِمْ فَلَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونِ

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن يَوْمِهِمُ الَّذِي يُوعَدُونَ

59. And indeed, for those who did wrong, there is a portion of torment like the evil portion of torment** [**which came for**] **their likes; therefore, let them not ask Me to hasten on** [**since they will taste it**]**!
60. Then, woe to those who disbelieved the Day which they is promised.

One who does not worship and glorify God Almighty and refrains from treading the Path for which he was created is a wrong-doer and disbeliever.

The Arabic word zanub literally denotes large bucket by which water is distributed, but it figuratively connotes disbelievers' deeds indicating that a large portion of Divine torment is in store for disbelievers in the same manner that it was sent down upon former peoples like 'Ad and Thamud.

"Let them not ask Me to hasten on"

is a response to disbelievers' derisive inquiry as to the time of Divine torment to be sent down upon them. The blessed Verses in question are addressed to them, saying that the time of your torment shall arrive and they need not hasten.

The last Verse is saying:

"Woe unto those who disbelieved, since they shall be afflicted with severe torments in store for them on the Day of Resurrection."

1. 7:195
2. 8:62
3. For a tradition narrated in this vein from Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha, see Saduq's Tawhid; Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 130.
4. 15:1
5. 16:82
6. 26:195
7. Usul Kafi, vol. 4, p. 256.
8. Tafsir Safi, vol. 5, p. 75.
9. Tafsir Makhzan al-'Irfan, p. 334.

Surah al-Tur, Chapter 52, Verses 1 - 28

(The Mount)
Section (juz'): 27
Number of Verses: 49

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The Chapter was revealed in Mecca and it has forty nine Verses. The title of the Chapter owes its designation to the opening Verse. The word Tur, connoting the Mount of Tur, the appointed place (miqat) where Torah was Divinely revealed to Prophet Moses (as), is attested ten times in the Holy Qur'an. Like other Meccan Chapters, Chapter 52 mainly treats of Resurrection, the Rewards to be granted to the pure, and the chastisement in store for disbelievers.

Mention is also made herein to defending the Noble Prophet (S) and the virtues of patience and perseverance.

Merits of the Recitation of the Chapter

According to a Prophetic tradition:

"One who recites Surah al-Tur shall be safe from torment and shall enjoy Divine Favors in Paradise."

Another tradition narrated from Imam Baqir (as) reads:

"One who recites Surah al-Tur shall be grated Divine Good in this world and the Hereafter."

It is evident that such great Rewards in this world and the Hereafter fall into the share of those who recite the Chapter in order to preoccupy themselves with contemplation and make use of the same to act upon them.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 1-8

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

وَالطُّورِ

وَكِتَابٍ مَّسْطُورٍ

فِي رَقٍّ مَّنشُورٍ

وَالْبَيْتِ الْمَعْمُورِ

وَالسَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوعِ

وَالْبَحْرِ الْمَسْجُورِ

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ

مَا لَهُ مِن دَافِعٍ

1. By the Tur [***Mount***].
2. And by an Inscribed Book.
3. By a parchment unrolled.
4. And by the Prosperous House.
5. And by the roof [***of the heaven***] ***raised high.***
6. And by the blazing sea.
7. Indeed, the torment of your Lord will surely come to pass.
8. There is no impediment for it.

The word tur denotes "mountain," but it ad hoc connotes a mount in the Sinai region which served as the appointed place where Prophet Moses (as) met with Divine Manifestation. The mount is a sacred place and the Holy Qur'an depicts it as al-Tur ("the Mount"). The Arabic phrase kitab mastur designates Scriptures like the Torah and the Holy Qur'an inscribed on thin pieces of paper which were unrolled rather than rolled.

The word raqq in the phrase fi raqq-in manshur deriving from raqqa denoting thin and delicate parchment prepared for writing. Manshur denotes "unrolled" and masjur signifies "ablaze" which also denotes "brimming, abounding, filled." The compound bayt al-Ma'mur ad hoc refers to the House of God Almighty which has always been prosperous through the presence of pilgrims.

The holy Ka'ba is designated twice as bayt;

(***"house"***)***;***

the other instance is bayt al-'atiq;

(***"ancient house"***).

According to traditions, there is place above Ka'ba in the heavens where angels circumambulate it and it is also termed as bayt al-ma'mur.[1]

The phrase al-bahr al-masjur denoting blazing and agitated sea or those which shall be set ablaze on the Day of Resurrection, as it is attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[2]:

"And when the seas become as blazing fire or overflows"

or it may connote magma erupting at times through volcanoes.

It is also worthy of note that as mentioned above under 51:60:

"Therefore, woe unto those who disbelieve from their Day which they have been promised"

where it treats of the promise of the inevitable occurrence of Resurrection.

The Chapter in question, following five oaths, reads:

"Indeed the torment of your Lord shall certainly come to pass. There is no impediment for it."

In short, the blessed Verses in question make a reference to the torment in store for disbelievers saying that in the same manner that the constituent elements of the world of being follow a certain order unimpeded by any impediment, the torment in store for disbelievers and contenders and their abode in Hell is certain against which no impediment may arise.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 9-14

يَوْمَ تَمُورُ السَّمَاء مَوْرًا

وَتَسِيرُ الْجِبَالُ سَيْرًا

فَوَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي خَوْضٍ يَلْعَبُونَ

يَوْمَ يُدَعُّونَ إِلَى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ دَعًّا

هَذِهِ النَّارُ الَّتِي كُنتُم بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ

9. The Day when the heaven shall shake with a dreadful shaking.
10. And the mountains shall move away with haste.
11. Then woe unto the beliers on such Day.
12. Who are immersed in falsehood preoccupied with vain talk [***regarding Divine Signs***].
13. The Day when they shall be pushed down by force to Hellfire with a forceful pushing.
14. This is the Fire which you used to recurrently belie.

The Arabic word mawr denotes speedy and circular, but disorderly and abyss like, movement, such that the wind scatters dust in the air and shakes everything. The word khawdh originally denotes "plunge into water and passing the same" but it is figuratively applied to being preoccupied with vanity and falsehood.

The word da‘‘ designates pushing violently.

It is worthy of note that all the world of existence has been created for man and when his affairs come to an end in this world, the world of existence shall be rolled up as well;

(*"The Day when the heaven shall shake with a dreadful shaking"*).

Thus it is also attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur’an:

"We shall roll up the heaven like a scroll."

It is only God Almighty Who is not subject to alteration. The seven heavens shall shake as well and change into waves in motion.

The mountains which fixate the earth shall be restless on that Day;

"And the mountains shall move away with haste."

The blessed Verses nine to eleven are saying that following a reminder as to the Signs of His Mercy and the creation of all beings in the form of oaths, God Almighty is saying that in the same manner that everything is well-established in its proper place the heavens, the mountains, the seas, and the prosperous world and all beings have been recorded in the Preserved Tablet, the Divine Torment in store for those who deserve it is based upon order and justice and the same shall appear when the heaven shakes violently and mountains move away from their places.

The blessed Verses make a reference to the time of Resurrection saying that the material world which is established by Divine Order shall disintegrate upon Divine Will and changes into the Hereafter. In short, the material world shall be rolled up and the Hereafter shall appear. On such Day, wayl, which is said to be a bottomless pit for those who belied Divinely appointed Messengers and Prophets and attributed madness, sorcery, and lying to them.

The blessed Verses twelve to fourteen enumerate the characteristics of those who belie Prophets saying that they play in vanity with natural phenomena which are not well-established and are transient and unbefitting compared to spiritual affairs and Divine teachings, since their words and acts resemble children and lunatics, devoid of reason and insight.

Had they not been preoccupied with vanity and attributing falsehood to Prophets nor had they called them sorcerers, liars, and lunatics, they would have perceived the truth.

"The Day when they shall be pushed down by force to Hellfire with a forceful pushing."

The adverb of manner da‘‘an ("with a forceful pushing") connotes that on such Day, Divine Torment shall fall into the share of disbelievers and they shall be pushed down by force to Hellfire and it shall be said unto them that it is the Fire against which you were warned by Prophets but you failed to investigate the

veracity of their words and believe in truth; it was out of your prejudice and concupiscent desires that you regarded their words as legends and made attempts to bear animosity against Messengers of Truth and inflict harms upon them.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 15-16

أَفَسِحْرٌ هَذَا أَمْ أَنتُمْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ

اصْلَوْهَا فَاصْبِرُوا أَوْ لَا تَصْبِرُوا سَوَاء عَلَيْكُمْ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

15. Is this [torment] magic or do you not see?
16. Taste you therein its heat and whether you are patient of it or impatient of it; it is all the same. You are only being requited for what you used to do.

Polytheists and disbelievers claimed at all times that the Noble Prophet (S) was a sorcerer robbing them of their sense and casting veils on their eyes such that they might acknowledge miracles and Revelation. Thus, they shall be censured and rebuked on the Day of Resurrection by asking them if it is sorcery.

Are they not able to perceive the fire and sense its heat? These two blessed Verses censures disbelievers who term Divine Revelation and miracles as sorcery. They are inquired as to what they see of different kinds of torment is sorcery and something baseless or they are unable to see the torment in the same manner that that the eyes of their hearts were blind unable to perceive the truth and veracity of their words.

The reason is that they denied the Truth and the people of Truth in this world thereby they shall enter their abode in Hell abounding in torment and affliction which shall be the recompense of their deeds. It shall be all the same whether they be patient or fail to be so, since as mentioned in the blessed Verse, torment awaits them and nothing may impede it. Such torment is the recompense of their evil deeds.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 17-18

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَعِيمٍ

فَاكِهِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ وَوَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ

17. Indeed, the God fearing shall be in Gardens [of Paradise] and Abundant Bounties.
18. Enjoying in that which their Lord has bestowed on them, and their Lord saved them from the

torment of the torment of Hellfire.

Fearing God Almighty is the key to Paradise;

(*"Indeed, the God fearing shall be in Gardens* [*of Paradise*] *and Abundant Bounties"*).

Following warning those who denied Divine Signs and followed concupiscent desires and wasted their lives in sport and play, the twain blessed Verses bear glad tidings to the God fearing who abstained from following Satan and concupiscent desires and obeyed the Truth and Divinely appointed Messengers and fearing God Almighty turned into their permanent disposition of mind such that they deserved the attribute of Fear God Almighty.

It should be borne in mind that fearing God Almighty is an exalted state ranking higher than belief, such that every believer does not fear God Almighty and such fear has not turned into his permanent disposition of mind.

In short, the twain blessed Verses in question treat of the exalted state of the God fearing. On the Day when the heaven shall be cleft asunder and the constituent elements of the earth shall be scattered and the world shall come to its end and disbelievers shall be pushed toward Hellfire, the God fearing shall be happy and delighted in Gardens of Paradise enjoying abundant Bounties and whatever shall be bestowed upon them by God Almighty while they shall be saved from excruciating torments of Hell.

The Arabic relative ma ("that") in:

"enjoying in that which their Lord has bestowed on them"

designates general applicability, namely it is not only applied to mundane Bounties but also it designates all worldly and spiritual Bounties bestowed upon the God fearing while they shall be saved from torment, suffering, and affliction;

(*"Indeed, the God fearing shall be in Gardens* [*of Paradise*] *and Abundant Bounties, enjoying in that which their Lord has bestowed on them, and their Lord saved them from the torment of the torment of Hellfire"*).

Surah al-Tur - Verses 19-20

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَّصْفُوفَةٍ وَزَوَّجْنَاهُم بِحُورٍ عِينٍ

19. [*It shall be said unto them:*] *"Eat and drink with happiness because of what you used to do."*

***20. They will recline on thrones arranged in ranks. And We shall marry them to hur** [**beauties with wide lovely eyes**].*

The twain blessed Verses are addressed to the people of Paradise saying unto them to eat and drink with happiness and enjoy the Bounties of Paradise without entailing any hardship or ailment. They shall recline on bejeweled thrones arranged in ranks. God Almighty shall marry them to beautiful hur with wide lovely eyes.

Those who abstained from watching those outside the circle of close kinship shall have beautiful spouses in the Hereafter.

Surah al-Tur - Verse 21

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُم بِإِيمَانٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَا أَلَتْنَاهُم مِّنْ عَمَلِهِم مِّن شَيْءٍ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ

21. And those who believe and whose offspring follow them in faith, to them shall We join their offspring, and We shall not decrease the Rewards of their deeds in anything. Every person is a pledge for that which he has earned.

The blessed Verse in question treats of other spiritual and material Bounties in store for the people of Paradise saying that those who believed and whose offspring followed them in believing in God Almighty shall join their offspring in Paradise without decreasing any of their Rewards for their deeds.

It is also a great Bounty that believers shall be joined by their offspring in Paradise enjoying their company without any decrease in their Rewards.

It is narrated from the Command of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) that the Messenger of Allah said:

"believers and their offspring shall be in Paradise reciting this Verse."[3]

It is also narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) that the children of believers shall be taken to their fathers as a token of respect.[4]

It is worthy of note that it is another Divine Favor which shall be bestowed upon God Fearing believers such that their children shall join them in Paradise since they were the pupil of their eyes in this world and they wished to be with them as a consequence of which such great Favor shall be bestowed upon them in Paradise.

It is noteworthy that the blessed Verse closes by saying that "every person is a pledge for that which he has earned" thereby everyone shall be answerable for his own deeds and he shall not be censured for vices committed by others.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 22-23

وَأَمْدَدْنَاهُم بِفَاكِهَةٍ وَلَحْمٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ

يَتَنَازَعُونَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا لَا لَغْوٌ فِيهَا وَلَا تَأْثِيمٌ

22. And We shall provide them with fruit and meat such as they desire.
23. There they shall pass from hand to hand a cup, free from any vain talk and free from sin.

The blessed Verse proceeds with an enumeration of the Bounties which shall be bestowed upon the people of Paradise saying that We shall prepare whatever the people of Paradise desire of meat and fruit and We shall increase the Bounties they desire such that they shall bear neither hardship nor affliction for obtaining them.

"Such as they desire"

reflects that God fearing believers shall avail themselves of whatever they desire since they reflect Divine Creativity since they shall be able to create whatever they desire. The blessed Verse 23 is saying that the people of Paradise shall pass from hand to hand a cup brimming with the wine of Paradise. The wine shall be such that it shall not take away reason nor shall it lead to committing vices.

It makes a reference to the point that Bounties in store for the people of Paradise shall be free from blights and afflictions unlike those of mundane ones which entail pains and afflictions.

Surah al-Tur - Verse 24

وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ غِلْمَانٌ لَّهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لُؤْلُؤٌ مَّكْنُونٌ

24. And there will go round pages of theirs to serve them as if they were pearls in shells.

While reclining on their royal thrones, the people of Paradise shall be served by most beautiful pages resembling pearls in shells. Pearls look so fresh, transparent, and beauteous in shells though they preserve their beauty without shells, but dust and other impurities decrease their freshness and brilliance. Pages of Paradise look so beautiful, fresh, and white complexioned that they are likened to pearls in shells.

The expression:

"go round"

makes a reference to their preparedness for rendering service at all times, though there shall be no need for servants in Paradise since the people of Paradise shall be provided with whatever they require. Such service reflects further respect for them.

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) that he was inquired:

"If servants resemble pearls in shells, how will be those being served, namely the people of Paradise?"

He replied:

*"The superiority of those who will be served over those who provide them with service in Paradise is like the superiority of full moon over other planets."*5

It is worthy of note that the expression "of theirs" reflects that each and every believer shall have his own servants and they serve them with utmost delight since there shall be no sorrow in Paradise.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 25-27

وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءلُونَ

قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِي أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ

فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَانَا عَذَابَ السَّمُومِ

25. And some of them [***people of Paradise***] ***draw near to others, questioning*** [***the secret of being provided with so many Bounties in Paradise***].
26. Saying: Aforetime [***in the world***], ***we were benevolent toward our families warning them against Divine torment.***
27. "Thus, Allah has been gracious to us and has saved us from the torment of the Fire.

These three blessed Verses also treat of the state of bliss enjoyed by the people of Paradise saying that besides other Bounties bestowed upon them, they associate with one another inquiring as to the virtues and merits leading to such exalted state to which they reply by saying that their virtues and merits included their association with the people of the world, entertaining fear of Divine torment and it was for the sake of such fear that God Almighty bestowed his favor upon them and saved them from excruciating and horrible torment.

Surah al-Tur - Verse 28

إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ

28. Indeed, We used to invoke Him before. Indeed, He is the Most Benevolent, the most Gracious.

The last words uttered by the people of Paradise, as reflected in the blessed Verse in question, is that they acknowledge the reality that they feel Divine Graciousness and Benevolence more than before saying that aforetime, they would invoke God Almighty and would praise Him as the Most Merciful and the Most Gracious, but they perceive the reality and the profundity of such Attributes that

He bestowed so many Bounties and Favors upon them for their little deeds and despite so many defects of theirs, He bestowed His Mercy upon them. It is worthy of note that the Most Beauteous Divine Attributes manifest on the Day of Resurrection through Bounties and Favors bestowed upon believers in Paradise and believers, witnessing such scenes, perceive the Truth behind His Most Beauteous Names; even Hell reflects His Attributes like Divine Justice, Wisdom, and Omnipotence.

1. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn.
2. 81:6
3. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan.
4. Ibid.
5. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan; Kashshaf; Qurtubi; Ruh al-Bayan; Abu al-Futuh Razi's Tafsir.

Surah al-Tur, Verses 29 - 49

Surah al-Tur - Verses 29-30

فَذَكِّرْ فَمَا أَنتَ بِنِعْمَتِ رَبِّكَ بِكَاهِنٍ وَلَا مَجْنُونٍ

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَّتَرَبَّصُ بِهِ رَيْبَ الْمَنُونِ

29. Thus, remind [people] that by the Grace of Allah, you are neither a soothsayer, nor a madman.
30. Or do they say: He is a poet! We await his calamitous death!"

In the twain blessed Verses God Almighty thus addresses His Messenger bidding him to remind

disbelievers of fulfilling their duty against Allah and says unto him to fulfill his obligations toward Allah. He is further told that God Almighty has bestowed upon him such exalted state. He is neither a soothsayer, nor a madman, nor a lunatic.

The word

soothsayer

is applied to someone who may perform extraordinary things through the medium of jinn and devils. Such person claims to be aware of the unseen thus rendering falsehood as truth for people and most of his words are false and baseless and there may have been soothsayers who falsely claimed to be Prophets.

The word

madman

is likewise applied to someone who performs acts beyond common practice and his acts are carried out without discipline and thought. Poetry is applied to rhythmical words adorned with rhymes.

It is however a source of surprise that the three characteristics attributed to the most prominent person in the world of existence, namely the Noble Prophet of the Islamic faith (S) are contradictory and one single person may not possess all the three attributes, since soothsaying springs from self-mortification and despite the fact that it is satanic, it is done through reason polluted with imagination and estimative faculty and the soothsayer intends to draw conclusions out of his own acts.

How may such characteristic be found in someone together with madness which stems from unconsciousness and alienation. The people of Mecca were speakers of the Arabic tongue and could notice the eloquence of the Holy Qur'an and were aware that Qur'anic Verses was different from poetry and their own speech, but they pretended ignorance and termed the Noble Prophet (S) as poet.

In short, all these baseless accusations stemmed from jealousy, envy, arrogance, and obduracy rather than from ignorance. It was out of their vile disposition that they expected some ailment or another affliction fall upon the Noble Prophet (S) such that he may cease his Prophetic Call and receiving Divine Revelation of the inimitable Qur'anic Verses and thereby people may not follow him through converting to the Islamic faith.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 31-32

قُلْ تَرَبَّصُوا فَإِنِّي مَعَكُم مِّنَ الْمُتَرَبِّصِينَ

أَمْ تَأْمُرُهُمْ أَحْلاَمُهُم بِهَذَا أَمْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ

***31. Say** [**O Muhammad SAW unto them**]: **"Wait! I am with you among the waiters!** [**You await my death and I await triumph over you.**]"*
32. Do their minds command them this** [**to attribute such baseless accusations to the Noble Prophet** (**S**)] **or are they people transgressing bounds?

The twain blessed Verses are addressed to the Noble Prophet (S) saying unto him that reply to disbelievers by asking them to await some blight or affliction like death fall upon him and he will await that death or torment fall into their share thus they may know that who has lost his mind and commits vices.

The blessed Verse 32 addresses the chiefs of the Quraysh who imagined that they were people of reason and intelligence. It also addresses those who regard themselves as reasonable and knowledgeable inquiring whether their reason and intelligence bid them to deny the Truth, whereas such denial stands against reason. The point is that they are rebellious and disobedient and their reason follows their concupiscent desires.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 33-34

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ تَقَوَّلَهُ بَل لاَّ يُؤْمِنُونَ

فَلْيَأْتُوا بِحَدِيثٍ مِّثْلِهِ إِن كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ

33. Or do they say: "He has forged it** [**the Holy Qur'an and has attributed it to God Almighty**]**?" Nay!** [**There is no such thing but the fact is that it is through their disobedience and envy that**] **They believe not!
34. Then if you speak the truth, produce a word like unto it.

Like other blessed Verses, these two Verses also treat of the Truth and Inimitability of the Holy Qur'an by saying that if they imagine that he has forged Qur'anic Verses, they are Arabs like him and as the Holy Qur'an says Qur'anic Verses are revealed in eloquent Arabic, they may make attempts at producing the like. The point is that they fail to convert because of their vile disposition of mind.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 35-36

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ

أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَل لَّا يُوقِنُونَ

35. Were they created out of nothing? Or were they themselves the creators?
36. Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they have no firm belief [***so that they attain to certitude regarding the Existence of the Creator***].

It is incumbent upon man to not cease his reasoning and guiding others against different kinds of accusations. Despite the fact that the preceding Verses treated of different baseless accusations against the Noble Prophet of Islam (S), God Almighty raises a number of questions in order to awaken their dormant conscience.

The Holy Qur'an presents the most significant philosophical discussions in the simplest form of expression. The two blessed Verses present two assumptions, firstly is man created for a cause or without the same and secondly, is it possible that man is able to create himself? Both assumptions fail to stand against reason, since man is a phenomenon and every phenomenon is in need of a cause. Furthermore, man who did not exist before may not cause his own existence.

It is reflected in the blessed Verse 36 that polytheists were aware that God is the Creator of them, the heavens, and the earth. It is reiterated in the Holy Qur'an that if polytheists are asked concerning the creator of the heavens and the earth, they would reply that God is the Creator.

Thus the main question presented in theses blessed Verses is:

"Why do you not believe in Divine Guidance but you disobey Divine Command. It is worthy of note that such people do not respond to the bidding of their reason out of their vile disposition of mind and thereby fail to attain to certitude regarding the Existence of the Omniscient and Omnipotence Creator and thereby fail to obey His Command."

Surah al-Tur - Verse 37

أَمْ عِندَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَبِّكَ أَمْ هُمُ الْمُصَيْطِرُونَ

37. Or are with them the treasures of your Lord? Or are they wield sway in this world?

The blessed Verse in question is asking if the treasures of the world are with them thereby they are needless and they may wield sway and authority as they intend to do so or they are in need of everything. It is worthy of note that polytheists believed in divine creatorship but they fail to acknowledge him as the creator of their existence and failed to acknowledge the Prophetic Call.

The blessed Verses present questions in order to censure them for failing to acknowledge the Call of the

Noble Prophet of Islam (S).

They are thus rebuked:

"Why do you not accept the Noble Prophet's (S) words? Do you possess Divine Omnipotence and Possessions? Have you found a way leading to the heavens on your own and may directly receive Divine Revelation?"

Surah al-Tur - Verse 38

أَمْ لَهُمْ سُلَّمٌ يَسْتَمِعُونَ فِيهِ فَلْيَأْتِ مُسْتَمِعُهُم بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ

38. Or have they a stairway** [**leading to heaven**] **by means of which they listen** [**to secrets of the heavens**]**? If it is true, then their listeners should produce evident arguments.

The blessed Verse in question is asking if they have access to some stairway through which they may ascend to heaven and thereby attain to knowledge concerning the higher world and its angels and sacred intellects. If it is true, it is incumbent upon them to produce evident arguments as to what they have heard and learned.

It may intend to say that such people who have not transcended beyond the world of nature and are unaware of the metaphysical world but are immersed in the mire of nature may not claim to have availed themselves of intellect and perfection and attribute baseless accusations as to madness and sorcery to the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) whose Noble Spirit is conjoined with the metaphysical world since he possesses the supreme intellect and is the first being to be created by God Almighty.

If these disbelievers are aware of the higher world, they are supposed to produce arguments and substantiate their claims in the same manner that Prophets produced arguments in order to substantiate their statements.

Surah al-Tur - Verse 39

أَمْ لَهُ الْبَنَاتُ وَلَكُمُ الْبَنُونَ

39. Or has He only daughters and you have sons?

The blessed Verse in question is saying that these disbelievers who are ignorant of the higher world and God Almighty may not attribute offspring to the Creator of the world regarding angels as daughters of God Almighty and select sons for themselves since they imagine that they are stronger and nobler.

It goes without saying that in terms of human values, sons and daughters are not different and the blessed Verse in question produces an argument to expose the falsity of the belief of opponents through producing the same argument against the opponent party. There are numerous references in the Holy Qur'an as to negating such superstitious belief through exposing the falsity of such baseless argument.

Surah al-Tur – Verse 40

أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُم مِّن مَّغْرَمٍ مُّثْقَلُونَ

40. Or is it that you ask a wage from them [***for your Prophetic Call***] ***so that they are burdened with a load of debt?***

The blessed Verse in question makes a reference to something which may be made use of by them as a pretext thereby the Noble Prophet (S) is addressed by a rhetorical question:

"Do you ask some remuneration from them for your Prophetic Call such that it bears heavily on their shoulders?"

The Arabic word maghram designates the loss incurred without any cause. The word muthqal which is cognate with ithqal denotes imposing heavy burden and hardship on someone.

Thus the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse is:

"Do you ask for indemnity against propagation of your Prophetic Call such that they are unable to settle their debt and thereby fail to convert to the Islamic faith?"

The same motif is recurrently used in the Holy Qur'an not only regarding the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) but also for many other Prophets (as), since the latter opened their Prophetic Call by saying that they did not expect any remuneration against propagation of Divine Call, such that their impartiality be substantiated and there remains no room for making excuses by those who find faults with everything.

Surah al-Tur – Verse 41

أَمْ عِندَهُمُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُونَ

41. Or that the Unseen is with them and they write it down [***on the Preserved Tablet***]***?***

The blessed Verse in question once more addresses them by asking whether they are aware of the secrets of the Unseen and they write down by using them. They falsely claim that the Noble Prophet (S) is a poet and they are awaiting his death and everything will come to an end through his death and his

Prophetic Call will be consigned to oblivion.

How do they know that they will be alive after his death? Who has told them such thing? The Qur'anic Verse may also say that if they claim to be aware of the secrets of the Unseen and Divine Injunctions and are needless of the Holy Qur'an and the Islamic faith, they are supposed to produce their arguments. Since they may not produce any arguments, their claim is a gross lie.

Surah al-Tur - Verse 42

أَمْ يُرِيدُونَ كَيْدًا فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هُمُ الْمَكِيدُونَ

42. Or do they intend employ some stratagem to efface the truth? But those who disbelieve are themselves plotted against!

The blessed Verse in question is asking if their denial stems from plotting, stratagem, and vanity that they intend to plot against the Noble Prophet (S)? But they are unaware that their stratagems will be used against themselves, since Divine Stratagems are far superior to theirs and they shall pay dearly for their plots.

If they imagine that they may be triumphant over the Noble Prophet (S) by getting together at Dar al-Nadwa, a town hall in Mecca at the time of the Noble Prophet (S), and plotting against him and falsely accusing him of soothsaying, madness, poetry, and the like, they are mistaken since His Omnipotence is superior to all powers and He guaranteed the safety, salvation, and triumph of His Messenger (S) in propagating his universal Call.

Surah al-Tur - Verse 43

أَمْ لَهُمْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

43. Or have they a god other than Allah? Glorified is Allah from all that they ascribe as partners [to Him].

In this blessed Verse, the last question is asked from disbelievers:

"Do they imagine that they have a patron? Is there any object of worship for them besides Allah? The blessed Verse proceeds by saying that God Almighty is glorified from all the partners associated with him by them. Thus, no one may provide them with patronage and support. It is in this vein that they are faced with a series of eleven extraordinary questions. How pleasing and convincing are Qur'anic questions, investigations, and arguments against which anyone seeking truth submits and is convinced."

Surah al-Tur - Verse 44

وَإِن يَرَوْا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاء سَاقِطًا يَقُولُوا سَحَابٌ مَّرْكُومٌ

44. They are so obdurate that even if they see a piece of the heaven falling down, they would say: "Clouds gathered in heaps [but it is not Divine Wrath]!"

Resuming the discussion with obdurate polytheists and disbelievers enlightening any truth seeking man, the blessed Verses expose their prejudice and obduracy saying that they are so obdurate that even if they see rocks fall down from the heaven as a result of Divine torment, they will say:

"You are mistaken. This is not a rock but a condensed cloud falling onto the earth."

Such obdurate people who deny sense perceptions and interpret rocks falling down from the heaven as condensed clouds while it is common knowledge that clouds which descend upon the earth are nothing but fog and such delicate fog may not be condensed to change into rocks, such attitude toward spiritual truths is crystal clear.

Shadows of sin, lustfulness, obduracy, and animosity may darken human vision to the extent that he denies sense perceptions. There is no hope for the guidance of such people. It may be noted in passing that the Arabic word kisf denotes "piece" which ad hoc connotes "falling down a piece of stone from the heaven as a token of Divine torment. The word markum designates "condensed," connoting something placed above something else.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 45-46

فَذَرْهُمْ حَتَّى يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي فِيهِ يُصْعَقُونَ

يَوْمَ لَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ

45. Therefore leave them alone till they meet their Day in which they will be afflicted with Divine Wrath and lightning.
46. The Day when their plotting and stratagems shall not avail them at all nor shall they be helped from any side.

The twain blessed Verses address the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) bidding him to leave them alone until they taste the hardship of a Day on which they shall have neither refuge nor deliverance. On that Day their plots and stratagems may not save them but they shall be recompensed for their vicious deeds and

vile words.

The blessed Verses bid the Noble Prophet (S) to not entertain any grief or sorrow for their words and deeds, since it is his obligation to propagate his Divine Call upon whose fulfillment he is supposed to leave them alone until the Day arrives on which they shall taste the recompense of their deeds and perceive that what they imagined to be their means of deliverance from torment shall be of no avail to them, but it has led to their loss.

It shall be on that Day that they may find neither support nor assistance. It may be noted in passing that the passive verbal form yus'aqun denotes unconsciousness and perdition as a result of lighting of torment.

Surah al-Tur - Verse 47

وَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا عَذَابًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

47. And indeed, for those who do wrong, there is another chastisement besides this in this world or in purgatory; but most of them know not.

At that time, disbelievers shall deserve torment for two reasons.

Firstly, they deserve torment for their disbelief thereby they associated other objects of worship besides Allah, since disbelief leads to torment.

Secondly, they not only have wronged themselves through depriving themselves of virtues and felicity but also have they left no stone unturned to wrong the Noble Prophet (S) and believers. Thus, their torment shall be different from that assigned for all disbelievers.

"Another chastisement besides this"

may indicate this worldly torment including being killed or captivated or it may designate torments descended from the heaven, like those sent down upon the peoples denying their Prophets (as) aforetime, including famine, awe-inspiring cries heard from the heaven as the consequences of their disbelief and harming Messengers of Allah. Such torments are besides those in store for them in the Hereafter. Such disobedient peoples tasted Divine Wrath in this world and it led to their perdition.

It may be noted in passing that according to Tafsir Qumi,

"another chastisement besides this"

makes a reference to the torment to befall those who wronged the family of the Noble Prophet (S) upon return.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 48-49

وَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَإِدْبَارَ النُّجُومِ

48. Therefore, wait patiently for the Decision of your Lord for indeed you are under Our Eyes and Protection. Glorify the Praises of your Lord when you get up from sleep.
49. And in the nighttime also glorify His Praises and at the setting of the stars.

In the twain blessed Verses, God Almighty addresses His Noble Prophet (S) and bids him to be patient against disbelievers who wrong him and persevere in the propagation of Divine Call despite the harms done to him by disbelievers, since he is protected by God Almighty. He is also bidden to wake up at daybreak when stars set and glorify the praises of the Lord.

Although the Noble Prophet (S) is bidden to remember God Almighty at all times and glorify his Lord in the day and at night, but it is said that all Divine Injunctions addressed to the Noble Prophet (S) are applicable to the Muslim community, unless it is proven that they are particularly addressed to the Noble Prophet (S).

Thus, it is incumbent upon believers to not forget God Almighty at any time owing to their worldly preoccupations but to obey Divine Injunctions and abstain from committing any wrong.

Many an exegete have interpreted:

"and in the nighttime also glorify His Praises"

as "night prayer" and maintain that:

"and at the setting of the stars"

refers to the two unite recommended prayer established at daybreak when stars disappear in daylight. It is narrated from Imam 'Ali (as) that "at the setting of the stars" refers to the twain units of recommended daybreak prayer established before morning prayer when stars set.[1]

It is also narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

"The two unit recommended prayers established in the morning and at night are far better for you than the world and worldly possessions."[2]

It is worthy of note that worshipping and glorifying God Almighty in the heart of the night is quite different

in terms of serenity and delight. May God Almighty bestow upon us the blessing of waking up early in the morning, praying silently to our Maker, and a prolonged life.

1. Majma' al-Bayan, under 50:40.
2. Tafsir Qurtubi, under the blessed Verses in question.

Surah al-Najm, Chapter 53, Verses 1 - 32

(The Star)
Section (juz'): 27
Number of Verses: 62

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The Chapter, requiring obligatory prostration, has sixty two Verses and it was revealed in Mecca. The designation of the Chapter derives from the first Verse in which God Almighty swears by the star. Chapter 53 makes reference to the position of Revelation and the manner of its Revelation to the Noble Prophet's (S) heart and like Chapter 17 treats of the Noble Prophet's (S) Ascension to the heavens.

Another part of the Chapter deals with polytheists' superstitious and idolatrous customs and rituals and worshipping angels and the same is condemned herein. It also discusses the states of the virtuous and the evil people the standard of which is remembrance of the Resurrection Day and Divine Reward and Recompense.

Merits of the Recitation of the Chapter

Significant merits have been enumerated in traditions for recitation of the Chapter among which is a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

"One who always recites Surah al-Najm every day and night is recognized amongst people as a meritorious person and God Almighty will forgive his sins and will win popularity amongst people."[1]

Other traditions in this vein are not mentioned for the sake of brevity. Undoubtedly such great rewards are bestowed upon those who recite the Chapter as a means of contemplation and acting upon its Injunctions such that the teachings may shed their light on their lives.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 1-2

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

وَالنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَى

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَى

1. By the star when it goes down.
2. Indeed, your companion [***Prophet Muhammad*** (***S***)] ***has neither gone astray nor has erred.***

The Chapter opens with the word najm "star" by which God Almighty swears

(***"By the star when it goes down"***).

Exegetes provide many a view regarding the contextual meaning of the word. Some maintain that it makes a reference to the Holy Qur'an since such connotation is consistent with the following blessed Verses regarding Divine Revelation.

They hold that the expression alludes to the Arab's practice of terming as star what develops in time at different intervals.

Since the Holy Qur'an was revealed to the Noble Prophet (S) in a period of twenty three years at different intervals, it is referred to as 'star' and the expression:

"when it goes down"

makes a reference to its Revelation to the pure heart of the Messenger of Allah (S). However, some other exegetes maintain that it alludes to a star like Pleiades or Jupiter since they are of particular significance.

Some also hold that:

"the star"

refers to meteors through which devils are repelled from the heaven and Arabs term such meteors as najm.

However, no evident argument has been provided for any of the four interpretations, but the blessed Verse, as far as the application of the word,

"the star"

requires, serves as an oath to all the stars reflecting Divine Manifestations of God Almighty, the great mysteries of the world of creation, and the extraordinarily great creatures created by Allah. Swearing by the great creatures of the world of creation like the sun and the moon are attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an.

The ascent of the stars are more remarkable, but the emphasis laid on their "going down" is owing to the fact that their descent bears witness to their temporal contingence (huduth) and the negation of star worshippers beliefs.

Thus, God Almighty alludes to both the ascent and descent of stars, since such allusion substantiates their temporal contingence and their being checked by the laws of creation.

It is worthy of note that the inner, rather than the outer, meaning of the Verse as attested in traditions, is taken by some exegetes to allude to the Noble Prophet (S) and accordingly,

"going down"

refers to his descent from the heaven on the night of Ascent.

Now, let us turn toward the reason lying behind the oath.

The blessed second Verse thus expounds that your companion, Prophet Muhammad (S) has never gone astray nor has he been in error,

(*"Indeed, your companion* [*Prophet Muhammad* (*S*)] *has neither gone astray nor has erred"*).

He always treads the Path of Truth and the slightest error may not be found in his words and deeds.

The word:

***"companion"* (*sahib*)**

may indicate that what he says is out of his compassion and love for you.

Many an exegete draw no distinction between the Arabic past tense forms dhalla and ghawa ("go astray; be in error") but regard the twain as laying emphasis on each other. However, some exegetes maintain that there is a difference between the twain such that the former connotes that one may never find the right path toward one's destination but the latter connotes that one proceeds on a path but his path happens not to be straight and free from error.

The former is like "disbelief" and the latter resembles committing sins and transgressing the bounds. It is worthy of note that in his Mufradat under gh-y-y, Raghib says that the latter signifies "ignorance accompanied by corrupt belief."

Thus, dhalala designates absolute ignorance but ghawaya signifies ignorance accompanied by false belief. However, in this blessed Verse, God Almighty intends to negate any form of error and ignorance from His Messenger (S) thereby repudiating the false accusations ascribed to him by his enemies.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 3-4

وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَى

إِنْ هُوَ إِلاَّ وَحْيٌ يُوحَى

3. Nor does he speak of concupiscent desire.
4. His word is only a Revelation revealed to him.

The words of the Noble Prophet (S) arise from neither personal desires nor social milieu. Thus, the blessed Verses in question say that the Noble Prophet (S) does not speak of concupiscent desires but he merely imparts Divine Revelation. In this respect, he is different from common people who speak out of their natural inclinations and concupiscent desires, rather his words arise from the Noble Prophet's (S) heart connected to the higher world.

In this vein, a number of traditions will be quoted.

The late scholar, Saduq in his Amali narrates a tradition according to which the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) turned to people after early and late evening prayers saying:

"A star (light) will descend upon the house of one of you at day break and the owner of the house will be my successor."

All people were awaiting the descent at day break. Ibn ‘Abbas is quoted as saying that his father, the Noble Prophet's paternal uncle, was most eager to see upon whose house the star will descend.

However, it descended upon the house of Imam ‘Ali (as) and the Noble Prophet (S) said:

"O ‘Ali! By Allah Who called me to Prophethood, it is certain that you will be my successor."

Some hypocrites claimed that the Noble Prophet (S) praised his cousin out of concupiscent desires when these blessed Verses were revealed to the Noble Prophet (S).[2]

Regarding the fact that the satisfaction of all people may not be obtained nor may their tongues be checked, Saduq in his Amali says that some people even attributed entertaining concupiscent desires to the Noble Prophet (S).

Thus, God Almighty defended his Messenger (S) by saying:

"Nor does he speak of concupiscent desire. His word is only a Revelation revealed to him."3

It is narrated that Hamza asked the Noble Prophet (S):

"Why did you blocked all the gates opening to the mosque but left intact that of 'Ali's (as) house?"

The Noble Prophet (S) recited these Verses from Surah al-Najm:

"His word is only a Revelation revealed to him."

Thus, he intended to say that he did so based on Divine Command.4

According to the fourth tradition, in response to disbelievers who said that;

"Indeed, this [the Holy Qur'an] is not but the legends of the ancients"

God Almighty decisively says:

"His word is only a Revelation revealed to him."5

When Imam 'Ali (as) was assigned as the Imam and successor of the Noble Prophet (S) at the Ghadir Khum, the latter was criticized, but he recited the blessed Verse:

"His word is only a Revelation revealed to him."6

Surah al-Najm - Verses 5-9

عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَى

ذُو مِرَّةٍ فَاسْتَوَى

وَهُوَ بِالأُفُقِ الْأَعْلَى

ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّى

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَى

5. He has been taught** [**Divine Revelation, namely the Holy Qur'an**] **by the Omnipotent Lord.
6. The Most Powerful Lord Who conquered all.
7. While he was in the higher horizon.
8. Then he approached and came closer,
9. And was at a distance of two bows length or closer.

The majority of Qur'an exegetes maintain that Gabriel, the trustee angel of Revelation who possesses utmost power, is being intended by:

"the one mighty of power" (***shadid al-quwa***).

Gabriel is so powerful that eradicated the city of the people of Lot (as) and levitated it and turned it awry and also caused the people of Thamud to perish by one horrible cry. "Dhu mirra" is another characteristic of Gabriel which designates that the angel possesses utmost power, intellect, intelligence, and delibration.

Philosophers maintain that Gabriel is the active intellect and the intellects of all intellectuals of the world are connected to it. The Arabic past tense verbal form fa-'stawa indicates that Gabriel rose and became stable and showed its original form unto the Noble Prophet (S).

According to a number of traditions, the Seal of Prophets (S) was the only Prophet who saw Gabriel in its original form. Once he saw its true form on the eastern side of the earth and another time, he saw it on the Night of Ascent close to Sidrat al-Muntaha, the lote tree of the Outer Boundary in the Seventh Heaven.

"While he was in the higher horizon"

may indicate that though Gbriel is in the metaphysical world,

"he approached and came closer"

to the Noble Prophet (S) while the proximity

"was at a distance of two bows length or closer"

which is seemingly an intellectible simile indicating perceptibility by which spiritual, rather than perceptive, proximity is being intended.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 10-11

فَأَوْحَى إِلَى عَبْدِهِ مَا أَوْحَى

مَا كَذَبَ الْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَى

10. Therefore, [Allah] revealed unto His servant whatever He revealed.
11. The [Prophet's] heart lied not in what he saw.

"Therefore, Allah revealed unto His servant, Muhammad (S), whatever He revealed."

According to Tafsir Manhaj al-Sadiqin, some Qur'anic exegetes maintain that God Almighty is the antecedent of all pronouns in Verses five to ten and:

"the Most Powerful"

refers to the Omnipotent Lord, as it is also said elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an:

"He is the All-Provider, the Most Powerful, the Constant."

The Proximity of God Almighty to the Noble Prophet (S) reflects the latter's elevated state in the Presence of the One God, the Creator of the world.

"Came closer"

indicates that God Almighty attracted His friend, Muhammad (S) to Him and such interpretation is substantiated by the tradition of Ascent according to which Muhammad (S) came closer toward God Almighty then came so close in terms of spiritual, rather than perceptible, proximity, that the distance between the two was to the extent of two bows or less.

It is narrated by Hasan ibn Fadhl that Muhammad (S) came close to Divine Throne; then, since he had not put his foot on a footing, he grasped the curtains of the Throne and was levitated in the air and God Almighty revealed Divine Revelation unto him.

The blessed Verse in question is saying that Muhammad's (S) love for and proximity to God Almighty reached such an extent that Divine Satisfaction is his satisfaction and what is accepted by him is accepted by God Almighty.

It is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) that replying to Dha'lab Yamani he said:

"The outer eyes have never seen Him but hearts through the truth of faith have perceived Him."[7]

However, it should be borne in mind that inner vision falls into two categories: intellectual vision accrued through reasoning and argumentation and the state of intuition by heart that stands above intellectual perception as a vision beyond perceptible vision. Such state should be termed as the state of intuition rather than that of argumentation.

The point is that perception through heart and inward intuition is a state specific to saints possessing different hierarchies, since inward intuition is of many a hierarchy and degree the perception of its truth is hard for those who have not attained to such state.

Based on the preceding blessed Verses and with due attention to the aforesaid interpretation, it may be stated

that the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) had the state of intuition and during his blessed lifetime he soared so high that he attained to the state of perfect intuition which once occurred in the beginning of his Prophetic Call and the other time it happened at the time of his Ascent.

He proceeded so close toward God Almighty that many a distance and veil were removed and even the closest angel to God Almighty, Gabriel, the Divine trustee, failed to attain to such state of proximity.

Another tradition is also worthy of note in this vein according to which 'Ayyashi narrates from Imam Baqir (as) that upon being asked regarding the Divinely revealed Verse:

"Then He revealed unto His servant what He revealed,"

the Noble Prophet (S) replied:

"It was revealed unto me that 'Ali (as) is the master of the believers, the Imam of the God fearing, the most brilliant of the honorable, and the first successor to the Seal of the Prophets (S)."

Then people said:

"We believe in God and His Messenger (S)." 8

The blessed Verse eleven is saying that in imparting what he had seen of his Lord's Signs, the heart of Prophet Muhammad (S) did not lie.

The blessed Verse reflects that God Almighty, rather than Gabriel, is the antecedent of the preceding Verses, since according to the consensus of Muslim community and consecutively transmitted traditions, upon receiving Divine Revelation through Gabriel, the Noble Prophet (S) was able to see Gabriel with his outward eyes and hear the angel through his outer ears and the blessed Verse in question attributes vision to the heart of the Noble Prophet (S).

The definite article al- in al-fu'ad may connote covenant ('ahd), that is what Prophet Muhamamd's (S) saw was not a lie, but it was absolute Truth.

The article may indicate genus in that as a general rule, what man perceives through his heart, inward feeling, and conscience is not exposed to error, since outward senses, like vision and hearing, may err, but error may not penetrate intuitive cognition (wijdaniyyat) and the Noble Prophet (S) attained to such spiritual, rather than perceptible, proximity to God Almighty that inspired knowledge indirectly penetrated his heart.

It is narrated from Ibn 'Abbas (as) that Prophet Muhammad (S) saw God Almighty through his heart rather than outward eyes. Muhammad Hanifa narrates from his noble father (as) that the Noble Prophet (S) perceived his Lord through certitude by sight ('ayn al-yaqin) using crystal clear Signs and attained to such cognition through what he saw, though he was formerly aware of the same.

It is narrated from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri in Manhaj al-Sadiqin that upon being asked about the meaning of the blessed Verse in question, the Noble Prophet (S) said:

"I saw the Light."

It is narrated from the Imam (as) in Tafsir Kanz al-Daqa'iq that the Imam was asked:

"Did the Prophet (S) see his Lord in his Ascent?"

The Imam (as) said:

"Yes, he saw God through his heart."

Then he recited the blessed Verse:

"The [Prophet's] heart lied not in what he saw."

It is narrated from Imam Ridha (as), as quoted by Tafsir Nur under the blessed Verse in question, that he said:

"The Verses

'Indeed he did see of the Greatest Signs of his Lord"[9]

and

"The [Prophet's] heart lied not in what he saw"

reflect that the Noble Prophet (S) saw Divine Signs rather than Divine Essence."

Surah al-Najm - Verses 12-15

أَفَتُمَارُونَهُ عَلَى مَا يَرَى

وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَى

عِندَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَى

عِندَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَى

12. Will you then dispute with him about what he saw?
13. And indeed he saw him at another descent.
14. Near Sidrat al-Muntaha.
15. Near it is the Paradise of Refuge.

The Arabic verbal form fa-tumarunahu

(***"will you dispute with him"***)

is derived from mira' ("dispute accompanied with doubt"). Nazlatan designates "being revealed in whole." Sidrat al-Muntaha is the name of a place close to the promised Paradise abounding in Divine Favors and according to traditions, none, but the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) was the only one who reached it.

According to traditions, Sidrat al-Muntaha is applied to the last state of the ascent of angels. It is also reflected in traditions that Sidrat al-Muntaha is the name of a Lote Tree with any one of whose leaves an angel glorifies God Almighty.

Since many people entertained doubts regarding the Ascent of the Noble Prophet (S) and it seemed incredible to them, God Almighty said in Surah al-Isra[10]:

"Glorified is He Who took His servant for a journey at night from Masjid al-Haram to Masjid al-Aqsa, the neighborhood whereof We have blessed, so that We might show him Our Signs."

The blessed Verse is saying that he is not exposed to error and there is a very exalted cause for Ascent.

"Will you then dispute with him about what he saw?"

Disbelievers indubitably may not believe in the Revelations of the saints of God Almighty and engage pessimistically in disputes with them.

It is worthy of note that Sidrat al-Muntaha is so significant that Paradise with all its greatness stands beside it and there is a state still higher than Paradise.

"Near Sidrat al-Muntaha. Near it is the Paradise of Refuge."

Although God Almighty bestows His Grace upon all people, but He at times provides certain people with further privileges.

“And indeed he saw him at another descent"

indicates that upon His Messenger's (S) Ascent, God Almighty bestowed special privileges upon him in the same manner that God Almighty is with all people;

(***"and He is with you"***),

but His being with His Messenger (S) is certainly different.

"Indeed Allah is with those who fear [Him]."

Divine Grace and being with His servants are at times general and at times particular. He invited His Messenger (S) to the heavens and provided him with special privileges beside Sidrat al-Muntaha and the Promised Paradise.[11]

Surah al-Najm - Verses 16-18

إِذْ يَغْشَى السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَى

مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَى

لَقَدْ رَأَى مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَى

16. When that covered the lote tree which did cover it!
17. The sight turned not aside nor did it transgress beyond the limit.
18. Verily, he did see of the Greatest Signs of his Lord.

"When that covered the lote tree"

reflects that Sidrat al-Muntaha is covered by a halo of light, beauty, and purity such that it is indescribable. It is said that a large number of angels cover the tree. It is narrated from the Noble Prophet that he had seen an angel standing on each leaf of Sidrat al-Muntaha glorifying God Almighty.

The blessed Verse is saying that the Noble Prophet (S) saw Gabriel by its original form on the Night of Ascent when the lote tree was covered by a large number of creatures reflecting Divine Greatness and Magnificence.

The blessed Verse 17 is saying that the Noble Prophet (S) did not gaze at Gabriel but he looked constantly at the angel without being perplexed or erring. His sight did not turn aside nor did it transgress the bounds.

"Verily, he did see"

in the blessed Verse 18 indicates that by God Almighty! Upon his Ascent unto the heaven, the Noble Prophet (S) saw Divine Signs in such manner that the Sign was the Greatest of Them. It was at that time that the wonders of the heavenly spheres were shown unto him. The Arabic partitive preposition min ("of, from") indicates that what the Noble Prophet (S) saw were some of Divine Signs rather than all of Them.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 19-22

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللاَّتَ وَالْعُزَّى

وَمَنَاةَ الثَّالِثَةَ الْأُخْرَى

أَلَكُمُ الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْأُنثَى

تِلْكَ إِذًا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَى

19. Have you then considered al-Lat and al-'Uzza[12]
20. And Manat, the other third?
21. Is it for you the males and for Him the females?
22. That indeed is a division most unfair!

The Omnipotent God Who takes man to the highest point of the heavens and shows His Great Signs unto him is far different from useless stone idols. The names of nine idols are attested in the Holy Qur'an: Lat, 'Uzza, and Manat in the blessed Chapter in question, Ya'al in Chapter 37, and Wadd, Ya'suq, Yaghuth, and Nasr in Chapter 71. Lat, 'Uzza, and Manat were three important idols worshipped by Arabs in pre-Islamic times (jahiliyya).

There is consensus amongst Muslims that they were destroyed thanks to the Hashemite Messenger of Allah (S), but Qur'an exegetes are not unanimous on the nature of these idols, though their views are not mentioned herein for the sake of brevity.[13]

In short, since polytheists termed idols and angels the daughters of God, the blessed Verses in question

were revealed to rebuke them through asking them rhetorical questions saying that Allah bestowed such exalted state to Prophet Muhammad (S) that He made him pass the lote tree such that the distance between Him and His Prophet (S) was the extent of two bows or less and bestowed Divine Emanation upon the pure soul of the Noble Prophet (S) and showed unto him the world of creation, but your idols may not provide you with such state.

Pagan Arabs are censured in rhetorical questions saying that you imagine that you have male offspring but attribute female offspring to God Almighty since you deem male offspring worthier and female offspring and you falsely claim that angels are daughters of God.

Surah al-Najm - Verse 23

إِنْ هِيَ إِلاّ أَسْمَاء سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُم مَّا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَانٍ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلاّ الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءهُم مِّن رَّبِّهِمُ الْهُدَى

23. They are but names which you have named, you and your fathers, for which Allah has sent down no authority as to their veracity. Polytheists follow but a guess and that which they themselves desire, whereas there has surely come unto them the Guidance from their Lord!

The Qur'anic term sultan designates 'argument' which results in scholarly authority. Idolaters maintained that each and every idol represented a certain issue, e.g. might, knowledge, love, and wrath. The Holy Qur'an says that such pompous titles are devoid of usefulness and these names bear no significance. Thus, the blessed Verse in question is saying that these idols which are your objects of worship to which you give rank and state are nothing but names devoid of significance.

They are inanimate objects devoid of truth. They lack authority and it is out of your ignorance and concupiscent desires that you imagine that they may be of any use and thereby take recourse to worshipping them in order to attain proximity to God Almighty. It is a source of surprise.

How may man who claims to possess intellect and knowledge and regards himself as the most superior creature bows down to an inanimate and manmade object and invokes it to answer his invocations and ascribes an exalted state to it without any proof and regards it as an intermediary between himself and God Almighty?

As it is reflected elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[14]:

"We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah,"

but they were unaware that proximity to God Almighty is not attainable in such manner as one who purifies his heart from natural and moral impurities and obeys Divine Command and Messengers of Allah and fosters His love in his heart will attain to utmost closeness to God Almighty. It is also worthy of

note that there is no need to intermediaries in attaining to Divine Favors.

Beliefs are supposed to rest upon arguments since conjecture and imitation are insufficient and error is consequent to fostering concupiscent desires. As it is reflected at the close of the blessed Verse, God Almighty has provided mankind with His Final and Decisive Argument through sending down His Revelation thereafter there remains no room for producing pretexts.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 24-25

أَمْ لِلإِنسَانِ مَا تَمَنَّى

فَلِلَّهِ الْآخِرَةُ وَالْأُولَى

24. Or shall man have what he wishes?
25. But to Allah belong the Hereafter and the world.

The twain blessed Verses ask whether polytheists believe that such idols possess power and might to fulfill their wishes and answer their invocations. However, the point is that they are insignificant, essentially transient, and need the Necessary Being and the Absolutely Needless Lord for their survival.

Whether polytheists seek the world or the Hereafter, they have to turn toward the Absolutely Needless Being and invoke Him for His Favors. It may be noted in passing that the Arabic word tamanna designates wish and desire be them possible or impossible, plausible or groundless.

Surah al-Najm - Verse 26

وَكَم مِّن مَّلَكٍ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ لَا تُغْنِي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا إِلاَّ مِن بَعْدِ أَن يَأْذَنَ اللَّهُ لِمَن يَشَاء وَيَرْضَى

26. And there are many angels in the heavens, whose intercession will avail nothing except after Allah has given leave for whom He wills and is pleased with.

The main emphasis in the blessed Verse in question is laid on the issue of polytheists saying that there are many angels in the heavens whose intercession is of no avail unless God Almighty gives leave for whom He wills and is pleased with.

When the angels of the heavens with their grandeur and greatness may not intercede with God Almighty unless He gives leave, such inanimate and insignificant idols may not be expected to be of any avail. When eagles swift in flight cannot soar that high, such ineffectual mosquitoes may not be expected to be

of any use. Would it not be shameful that they say that they worship these idols so that they may intercede at Divine Threshold on our behalf?

The interrogative and exclamatory particle kam ("how many, how much") ad hoc designates generality, that is, none of the angels may intercede with God Almighty on anyone's behalf without His leave.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 27-28

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ لَيُسَمُّونَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَسْمِيَةَ الْأُنثَى

وَمَا لَهُم بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا

27. Indeed, those who believe not in the Hereafter, name the angels with female names.
28. But they have no knowledge thereof. They follow but a conjecture and indeed conjecture may not indubitably render man needless of Truth.

The blessed twain Verses in question resume the discussion on the refutation of polytheists' beliefs, saying that those who do not believe in the Hereafter and name the angels as Allah's daughters.

Such shameful words are solely uttered by those who disbelieve in the Records and Recompense of deeds; otherwise they would not have taken the liberty to utter such words which are not substantiated by the least argument; nonetheless, logical arguments indicate that God Almighty has no offspring nor are angels female.

"Name the angels with female names"

makes a reference to the groundless words mentioned in the preceding blessed Verses such that these names are devoid of significance failing to transcend the bounds of nomenclature, since they are devoid of truth.

The blessed Verse 28 makes a reference to a crystal clear argument invalidating such nomenclature saying that they have neither knowledge nor certitude, but they follow their groundless conjectures. However, conjecture may not render man needless of the Truth and may not lead anyone to the Truth.

A believing and dutiful man never utters a word without knowledge and awareness nor does he ascribe any attribute to anyone without reason. Reliance upon conjecture belongs to Satan and his followers and acknowledgement of superstitions beacons error and insensibility.

Surah al-Najm - Verse 29

فَأَعْرِضْ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّى عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلاَّ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا

29. Therefore, withdraw from him who turns away from Our Reminder and desires noting but the life of this world.

Muslims are bidden to withdraw from those who turn away from the religion of God Almighty and do not give ear to Divine Injunctions, since turning away from God Almighty and mammonism are the most obvious tokens of error.

Thus, the blessed Verse in question addressed to the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) bids him to withdraw from those who solely seek mundane life and reinforcement of bestial faculties and refrain from engaging in scholarly arguments and discussions, since their utmost extent of knowledge is to enjoy the pleasures of the flesh and they may not transcend perceptible bounds.

Surah al-Najm - Verse 30

ذَلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُم مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اهْتَدَى

30. That is their utmost extent of knowledge and cognition. Indeed, your Lord it is He Who knows best those who have gone astray from His Path and He knows best those who have received Guidance.

This is the utmost extent of the knowledge and efforts of those who have forgotten God Almighty, have turned toward mundane life, and have exchanged their human dignity and honor with mundane possessions. O Prophet Muhammad (S)! God Almighty is Omniscient and knows best those who have gone astray from the Path of Truth and may not receive Guidance and He also knows best those who deserve Guidance.

Your obligation solely rests in guiding all people toward the Path to Guidance so that thereby Divine Final Argument reaches everyone.

Surah al-Najm - Verse 31

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاؤُوا بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا بِالْحُسْنَى

31. And to Allah belong all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, that He may requite

those who do evil with that which they have done and reward those who do good with what is best.

The blessed Verse in question proceeds with treating of Divine Omniscience as to the astray and the guided, saying that whatever exists in the heavens and the earth belongs to God Almighty. He is the Absolute Possessor and the Absolute Sovereign in the world of existence therefore He solely deserves to be worshipped and He is the only One of Whom man may expect intercession.

The main cause for the creation of the world of being is that man, the superior being in the world of existence, be guided toward the path of perfection through existential, legislative, and didactic schedules applied by Prophets. Thus, the blessed Verse in question closes with the consequence of such Possession by saying that the creation of the world aims at requiting those who do evil with that which they have done and reward those who do good with what is best.

Surah al-Najm - Verse 32

الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَائِرَ الإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلاّ اللَّمَمَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ وَإِذْ أَنتُمْ
أَجِنَّةٌ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنفُسَكُمْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى

32. Those who avoid great sins and vices except the inadvertently committed sins, indeed your Lord is of Great Forgiveness. He knows you well when He created you from the earth and when you were fetuses in your mothers' wombs. Therefore, ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows best him who fears Allah.

Following the promise given as to the Recompense and Reward for deeds, the blessed Verse in question is saying that God Almighty bestows further Favors upon those who have refrained from committing grave sins. Abstention from committing grave sins leads to Forgiving their lesser sins. It is worthy of note that persistence in committing lesser sins turns them into grave sins.

The Arabic word kaba'ir is the plural for of kabira

(*"grave sin"*)

and fawahish is the pluralized form of fahisha. The latter is applied to a sin whose vice is obvious to everyone, e.g. fornication. The Arabic word ithm originally denotes an act that makes man turn away from doing righteous good deeds. According to Raghib's Mufradat, the word lamam designates coming close to committing sins and the word is applied to lesser sins.

It is worthy of note that different senses have been attested for the Arabic word lamam in Usul Kafi[15] and lexicographic and exegetic sources, including:

An inadvertently committed sin which is not repeated.

An intended but unfulfilled sin.

A sin which is followed by repentance and apology.

A sin for which there is no warning against its Recompense.

A sin without specified bounds.

The point is that disobedience against Divine Commands is something gross but all sins do not rest on the same degree. Some sins, e.g. lying and backbiting, are grosser and entail more severe Recompense. Furthermore, the time, place, intention, knowledge, and ignorance at the time of committing sins and persistence in committing them or failing to do so impact the nature of committed sins.

The issue of grave and lesser sins is recurrently attested in the Holy Qur'an[16].

According to the Holy Qur'an all human deeds are being recorded:

(***"all lesser and greater*** [***issues***] ***are recorded"***)

as are all grave and lesser sins and the record of human deeds shall be unrolled on the Day of Resurrection;

(***"We shall bring out for him a book which he will find wide open,"***[17]).

It shall be at the time that a cry shall be heard:

(*"Woe unto us! What is this book in which all our greater and lesser deeds are recorded in it,"*[18]).

Grave sins are enumerated by Imam Ridha (as) as the following:

1. Murder

2. Fornication

3. Theft

4. Drinking wine

5. Parents' dissatisfaction and curse as to disinheritance ('aq)

6. Consumption of blood

7. Eating pork

8. Eating what is slaughtered in any name other than that of God Almighty

9. Usury

10. Bribery

11. Gambling

12. Dealing in fraud by selling deficiently

13. Accusing chaste women

14. Sodomy

15. Perjury

16. Desperation of Divine Mercy

17. Regarding himself saved from Divine torment

18. Bearing assistance to and reliance on tyrants

19. False oath

20. Mortification of property and rights of others

21. Lying

22. Arrogance

23. Prodigality and extravagance

24. Dissipation and squandering

25. Treason and betrayal

26. Deficiency in performing pilgrimage rites

27. Animosity against friends of God Almighty

28. Engaging in libidinous pleasures

29. Persistence in committing sins.[19]

Disbelief, polytheism, and failing to establish prayers are also mentioned as grave sins in a number of traditions. Qur'anic Verses and sound traditions have been mentioned in relevant sources, but they were not mentioned herein for the sake of brevity.[20]

It is narrated from Imam Baqir (as) that regarding:

"Do not consider yourselves pure"

he said:

"Do not take pride in establishing prayer, paying alms, taking fast, and invoking God Almighty since God knows best the God fearing."[21]

Imam Sadiq (as) was inquired:

"Is it lawful if one praises himself?"

He replied:

"If some emergency arises, there is no problem in doing the same."

It is also narrated that a Jew came unto the Messenger of Allah (S) and bragged about the miracles worked by Prophet Moses (as).

The Noble Prophet said:

"It is unbefitting to praise oneself, but for your information, I say unto you that Prophet Adam (as) for repentance, Prophet Noah (as) for being saved from drowning, Prophet Abraham (as) for deliverance from fire, and Prophet Moses (as) for being saved from God Almighty, swore to God on the right of the family of Muhammad (S).

O Jew! Had Moses (as) seen me, he would have believed in me. Imam Mahdi (as) is my descendant for whose assistance Jesus (as) descends from the heaven and established prayer behind him."[22]

Following an enumeration of grave sins, the blessed Verse in question treats of Divine Mercy and other Attributes. Addressing His Messenger (S), God Almighty says that His Forgiving is so great that He forgives lesser sins because of abstention from committing grave ones and He forgives the latter by repentance.

His pre-eternal Omniscience encompasses everything. He created man from earth. He knows him best when he is a fetus in his mother's womb. He is All-Aware of man's inner and outer states.

Thus, the blessed Verse says:

"He knows you well when he created you from the earth and when you were fetuses in your mother's wombs. Therefore, ascribe no purity to yourselves. He knows best him who fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him."

There is no need to conceal your defects, pretend to have faith, or be vain, since God Almighty knows

best one who fears Him and possesses virtues.

Finally, it is also worthy of note that certain acts lead to turning lesser sins to grave ones, including persistence in committing the former, underestimation of committing sins, being happy when committing them, committing sins out of disobedience, vanity in expectation of Divine respites, committing sins in public, committing sins by prominent figures.

The consequences of committing sins may also be enumerated in passing:

1. Callousness

2. Deprivation of Divine Bounties

3. Rejection of invocations

4. Changes in daily provision and sustenance

5. Deprivation from certain prayers, like night prayer

6. Sudden afflictions

7. Lack of rainfall

8. Destruction of one's house

9. Disgrace and humility

10. Brevity of lifetime

11. Earthquake

12. Grief and ailment

13. Conquest of the villainous.

There are Qur'anic Verses and traditions regarding each of the above. It is also mentioned in traditions that the friend of the Noble Prophet (S) is one who obeys God Almighty even if he is no relation to him and the Noble Prophet's (S) enemy is one who disobeys God Almighty even if he happens to be his relation.[23]

1. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 92, p. 305.
2. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn and other Shi'i and Sunni exegetic works.
3. Tafsir Kanz al-Daqa'iq.
4. Tafsir Durr al-Manshur by Suyuti.
5. Tafsir Nur, under the blessed Verse in question.
6. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn and other exegetic works.

7. Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 179.
8. Tafsir Makhzan al-'Irfan; Tafsir Safi; Tafsir Burhan; Tafsir Atyab al-Bayan under the blessed Verse in question.
9. 53:18
10. 17:1
11. Majma' al-Bayan; Hidaya;Atyab al-Bayan; Safi; Burhan.
12. Tafsir Jami' al-Jawami', vol. 6, p. 62.
13. Tafsir Makhzan al-'Irfan, vol. 6, p. 385.
14. 39:3
15. vol. 2, p. 433
16. e.g. 4:31; 18:49; 42:37:54:53
17. 17:13
18. 18:43
19. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, under the blessed Verse in question.
20. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn; Burhan; Safi; Makhzan al-'Irfan; Majma' al-Bayan; Usul Kafi.
21. Tafsir Kanz al-Daqa'iq.
22. Tafsir Nur, vol. 11, p. 325.
23. Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 15., p. 238.

Surah al-Najm, Verses 33 - 62

Surah al-Najm - Verses 33-34

أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي تَوَلَّى

وَأَعْطَى قَلِيلاً وَأَكْدَى

33. Did you observe him who turned away
34. And gave a little then stopped [***giving***]***?***

The Arabic verbal form akda derives from k-d-y ("stint, cease from giving alms") and is a cognate of kady ("hard land").

It is said on the occasion of the Revelation of the twain blessed Verses that a certain man was in the habit of giving alms but he was warned by others that he would be needy later on. He ceased from giving alms and became entangled with niggardliness. A number of Qur'an exegetes maintain that the twain blessed Verses allude to 'Uthman ibn 'Affan who expended lots of his possessions on paying alms.

His foster brother, 'Abd Allah ibn Sa'd said unto him:

"You expend much on paying alms. You may be poor some day."

'Uthman said unto him:

"I have committed many a sin. I pay alms so that I may expiate my sins."

'Abd Allah asked him to give his camel with its accessories unto him and he would pay for his sins. 'Uthman did so and asked witnesses to bear testimony and ceased from paying alms imagining that he was purified of his sins.

It was at the time that the twain blessed Verses were revealed saying O Muhammad! Did you see the man who turned his back on the day of the Battle of Uhud and fled?

He gave a little of his possessions to his foster brother so that the latter may carry the burden of his sins and ceased from expending on alms as a consequence of which he was censured and rebuked. There are also other views as to the occasion of the Revelation of the twain blessed Verses, but they were not mentioned for the sake of brevity.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 35-37

أَعِندَهُ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ فَهُوَ يَرَى

أَمْ لَمْ يُنَبَّأْ بِمَا فِي صُحُفِ مُوسَى

وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِي وَفَّى

35. Is with him the knowledge of the Unseen so that he sees the truths?
36. Or is he not informed about what is in the Torah of Moses (as) about bearing assistance to the deprived?
37. And of Scripture of Abraham (as) who fulfilled all that Allah ordered him.

Prophet Abraham (as) is called God's Friend owing to his obedience to and love for God Almighty. He was so loyal to Allah that he tolerated all hardships. Like unto other Prophets (as) he persevered in his obedience to Divine Lordship and passed all tests, including Nimrod's Fire and readiness to sacrifice his son for Allah. He was so perseverant that he was called God's Friend.

In short, the interrogative particle (hamza) in a-'indahu

(***"is with him"***)

and am-lam

(*"is he not"*)

in the blessed Verses 36 and 37 beacons the refutation of a false belief as per which he was aware of the Unseen world and he said that he took the responsibility for his sins. The following Verse is saying that it is recorded in the Scriptures of Moses (as) and Abraham (as) that no one may take the responsibility of others and each and every person stands accountable for his own sins.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 38-39

أَلاَّ تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى

وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَانِ إِلاَّ مَا سَعَى

38.** [**It is mentioned in all Scriptures that**] **that no one shall bear the burden of another.
39. And that man can have nothing but what he strives for.

The Arabic word wizr denotes heavy burden and it connotes sin which is actually a heavy burden. The Arabic word wazir is applied to vizier who shoulders the heavy burden of the administration of the state.

The blessed Verses are saying that God Almighty obliterates vices through committing righteous good deeds, forgives sins because of repentance, or turns vices into good, but never makes anyone bear the burden of sins committed by another.

In this vein, it is reported that the second caliph ordered a pregnant adulteress be stoned.

Imam 'Ali (as) objected saying that the fetus in her womb was not supposed to bear the burden of its mother's sin in which he relied on the blessed Verse:

"No one shall bear the burden of another."

He said:

"Be patient until the ruling will be executed after delivery."[1]

The Messenger of Allah (S) aid:

"The sins of fornicating parents are not to be borne by the illegitimate children."

Then he recited the Verse:

"No one shall bear the burden of another."[2]

The blessed Verse 39 reads:

"And that man can have nothing but what he strives for."

The Arabic word sa'y designates "move fast rather than run" but it often connotes "strive, make effort," since upon making efforts, rapid movements are being done whether the same aim at doing righteous good deeds or otherwise.

It would be of interest to note that man reaps the fruit of his efforts rather than fulfillment of something which connotes that it is of significance to strive and make efforts even if one may not attain to his goal; if he intends to do righteous good deeds, God Almighty will grant him his reward, since he seeks good intentions rather than fulfilled tasks.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 40-42

وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَى

ثُمَّ يُجْزَاهُ الْجَزَاء الْأَوْفَى

وَأَنَّ إِلَى رَبِّكَ الْمُنتَهَى

40. And that his deeds will be seen.
41. Then he will be recompensed with a full and the best recompense.
42. And that to your Lord is the return of all.

The blessed Verses 40 and 41 are saying that one who perseveres in the fulfillment of his tasks not only will soon receive the reward of his righteous good deeds in full but also will reap further rewards for the same. It is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an that each and every righteous good deed will accrue tenfold rewards and some believers and the God fearing will receive rewards several times as much.

The blessed Verse 42 says that everything shall indubitably return to your Lord, since He is the Efficient Cause and the Final Cause and the pivot of the world of creation, its beginning, and its end rests on Divine Pure Essence.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 43-44

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَضْحَكَ وَأَبْكَى

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَمَاتَ وَأَحْيَا

43. And that it is He Who makes [***whom He wills***] ***laugh and makes*** [***whom He wills***] ***weep.***
44. And that it is He Who causes death and gives life.

Although Divine Acts are being done through intermediaries, but in fact He is the Main Cause.

Repetition of the pronoun;

"He"

reflects that He is the only Main Cause. Thus it is said: O Muhammad (S)! Your Lord toward Whom you guide people is the Lord and Fosterer of all things. Creatures in the higher and the lower spheres and the overt and covert attributes and traces of the beings of the world of creation all rest upon His Will.

Even laughing arising from the felicity of the soul and weeping stemming from grief and sorrow as well as life and death as two opposite existential phenomena rest on Divine Will and the Existential Command of the Fosterer of the world of existence.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 45-47

وَأَنَّهُ خَلَقَ الزَّوْجَيْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَالأُنثَى

مِن نُّطْفَةٍ إِذَا تُمْنَى

وَأَنَّ عَلَيْهِ النَّشْأَةَ الأُخْرَى

45. And that He creates the pairs, male and female
46. From semen when it is emitted [***into the womb***].
47. And that upon Him is another creation upon Resurrection.

The law of conjugality in the system of creation is legislated by God Almighty rather than a convention

amongst human beings. It is the secret of survival. If removed, life will lose its vitality and will come to an end. The creation of female and female pairs is one of the wonders and the necessities of life.

The blessed Verses are saying that God Almighty creates the twain male and female pairs out of the semen emitted into the womb.

Following an enumeration of attributes regarding Divine Lordship and Fostering, the blessed Verses treat of Resurrection asking:

"Is not man aware that according to formerly revealed Scriptures, it is upon God Almighty to create another world?"

The Arabic word nash'a in the blessed Verse 47 denotes creation and fostering something.

The prepositional phrase:

"upon him"

reflects that as God Almighty created man and made him responsible for fulfilling certain obligations and granted them free will and some people are obedient and some disobedient, some are tyrants and some oppressed and none of them received their recompense and the rewards, it is upon the All-Wise Allah to create another creation so that justice be administered.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 48-49

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَغْنَى وَأَقْنَى

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ رَبُّ الشِّعْرَى

48. And that it is He Who causes needlessness and need.
49. And that He is the Lord of Sirius.

According to Raghib's Mufradat, the verbal forms aghna and aqna are cognate with Ghana ("needlessness") and quniya ("wealth").

Concerning the interpretation of the blessed Verse 48, Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"God Almighty renders man needless and also makes him satisfied with what he has."

Sirius is the name of a star worshipped by some who imagined that it affected their poverty and needlessness. It is worthy of note that it has been identified by the name of an idol as well. Sirius is the

most resplendent star that usually appears in the sky at dawn and it was due to its brilliance that some Arab pagans worshipped it.

The Holy Qur'an is asking:

"Why do you worship Sirius?"

Then the blessed Verse 48 is bidding people to worship the Lord, the Creator.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 50-54

وَأَنَّهُ أَهْلَكَ عَادًا الأُولَى

وَثَمُودَ فَمَا أَبْقَى

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِّن قَبْلُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا هُمْ أَظْلَمَ وَأَطْغَى

وَالْمُؤْتَفِكَةَ أَهْوَى

فَغَشَّاهَا مَا غَشَّى

50. And that it is He Who destroyed the former 'Ad [***people***]
51. And Thamud [***people***]. ***He spared none of them.***
52. And the people of Noah (***as***) ***aforetime. Indeed, they were more unjust and more rebellious.***
53. And He destroyed the cities of the people of Lot (***as***).
54. Therefore, He covered them out of His Wrath with that which he covered.

All chastisements will not be in the Hereafter. Some peoples have been destroyed by God Almighty in this world and we should take a lesson. Alluding to the preceding Verses, the blessed Verses in question refer to Divine Omnipotence saying that in the same manner that your Lord created beings and their states, He causes the destruction of tyrants and rebels.

In terms of Grace and Mercy God Almighty is the Most Beneficent and in terms of Wrath, He is Severe of Recompense. He caused the destruction of earlier 'Ad and Thamud peoples without sparing any of them and the people of Noah (as) had been destroyed because they were more tyrant and rebellious.

The earlier 'Ad were Prophet Hod's (as) people and a group of them, called Banu Laqim and later 'Ad,

resided in Mecca and were spared. It is also said that they were called earlier ‘Ad since they were the first people who were destroyed following the disobedient people of Prophet Noah (as).

The second Verse is saying that your Lord caused the destruction of the people of Thamud who were the people of Prophet Salih such that none of them were spared. The second and the fourth Verses say that Your Lord had caused the destruction of the people of Prophet Noah (as) as the recompense of their tyranny and disobedience before that of ‘Ad and Thamud.

The fourth Verse says that the city of Mu’tafaka inhabited by the People of Prophet Lot (as) was levitated by Gabriel and was cast down and some many hard pieces of clay rained upon them that the earth was covered with them. It is also said that Mu’tafaka was applied to four cities: Sawa’im, Adima, ‘Amura, and Sodom, and Gomorrah.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 55-56

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاء رَبِّكَ تَتَمَارَى

هَذَا نَذِيرٌ مِّنَ النُّذُرِ الْأُولَى

55. Then which of the Graces of your Lord will you doubt?
56. This is a warner of the warners of old.

The main obligation of all Prophets and the main goal of all Scriptures is to warn mankind. Although the blessed Verse is seemingly addressed to the Noble Prophet (S), but it actually addresses mankind saying that O man! You still entertain doubts despite observing so many tokens of Divine Omnipotence?

It sounds as if the traces of the destruction of the cities of ‘Ad and Thamud were still visible at the time of the Revelation of the Holy Qur’an as a reference is made to the same elsewhere[3];

(*"Indeed, you pass by them in the morning and at night; will you not then reflect* [*upon their disobedience and take a lesson out of the fate of the ancients*]*?"*[4]).

As mentioned in the exegetic work Manhaj al-Sadiqin, it is narrated on the authority of Muhammad ibn Humayd A‘mash from Salih from Ibn ‘Abbas that when the Noble Prophet (S) was assigned to appoint ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) as his successor and impart the same unto people, the Noble Prophet (S) first concealed the same from Quraysh chiefs, since he was aware that they would oppose the same and they would not acknowledge such appointment out of arrogance and envy and they might even harm ‘Ali (as).

Then Archangel Gabriel descended and said:

"God Almighty will keep you from their evil deeds"

and revealed the Verse:

"If you fail to do the same, you will not fulfill your Prophetic Call"

unto him. Thus, the Noble Prophet (S) appointed 'Ali (as) as the Imam and made it obligatory for the Muslim community on the Day of Ghadir Khum to obey his Guardianship.

Following the appointment of 'Ali (as) to imamate, the blessed Verse 55;

(***"Then which of the Graces of your Lord will you doubt?"***)

was revealed.5

In interpreting the blessed Verse 56, Qur'an exegetes maintain that the antecedent of the demonstrative pronoun;

"this" (***hadha***)

may be the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) who like his predecessors was Divinely appointed to warn people. The antecedent may be the Holy Qur'an that like former Scriptures was revealed for people's Guidance.

Then, it is a source of surprise that you do not believe in God Almighty. Some exegetes hold that the antecedent of the demonstrative pronoun in question is the torment sent down upon former peoples and the blessed Verse warns people against such torment. God Almighty knows best.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 57-58

أَزِفَتْ الآزِفَةُ

لَيْسَ لَهَا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ كَاشِفَةٌ

57. The Day of Resurrection draws near.
58. None besides Allah can avert the torments of that Day.

The Arabic feminine present participial form azifa denotes "approaching, drawing near." We are not supposed to imagine that the Day of Resurrection is far away but we should know that all mundane means and possessions may not decrease an iota of the afflictions of that Day;

(***"None besides Allah can avert the torments of that Day"***).

The only Support shall be provided by God Almighty with his All-Encompassing Graciousness and Mercy but none besides Him shall be able to avert the hardships on that Day.

Surah al-Najm - Verses 59-62

أَفَمِنْ هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ تَعْجَبُونَ

وَتَضْحَكُونَ وَلَا تَبْكُونَ

وَأَنتُمْ سَامِدُونَ

فَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ وَاعْبُدُوا

59. Do you then wonder at this Word?
60. And you laugh and weep not,
61. Wasting your lifetime in pastime and amusements.
62. Thus, fall you down in prostration to Allah and worship Him.

According to Tafsir Furqan, it is narrated that following the Revelation of these blessed Verses, the Noble Prophet (S) ceased to laugh to his last day, but he merely smiled. It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) that he said that the word hadith in the blessed Verse 59 is the accounts of the ancients.

It is worthy of note that the interrogative particle (hamza) in a-fa-man

(***"do you then"***)

is a rhetorical question by which it is asked:

"Are you not surprised at this account of the ancients and the torments and afflictions sent down upon them? Do you deride the news of the Day of Resurrection drawing near? You should be weeping out of awe and grief."

The Arabic plural present participial form samidun in the blessed Verse 61 connotes;

"wasting one's lifetime in pastime and amusements."

The present participle in question derives from s-m-d "to raise one's head arrogantly. The Arabic expression samad al-ba'ir ("the camel erected its neck") connotes raising one's head in arrogance.

Disbelievers are ad hoc likened to a camel erecting its neck while moving, since they disobey God Almighty and regard His Word a plaything.

The last blessed Verse addresses all mankind saying that they should fall in prostration before God Almighty, the Creator and Fosterer of their existence and solely worship Him, since He is the only One deserving to be worshipped. Manmade idols, stars, the sun, concupiscent desires do not deserve to be worshipped.

It is worthy of note that:

"fall you down in prostration to Allah and worship Him"

(fa-'sjudu wa '"budu) are both in the imperative mode designating necessity; as a consequence of which, all jurisprudents are unanimous that following the recitation of the blessed Verse 62, it is obligatory to fall in prostration to Allah. It is reported that upon the Revelation of the blessed Verse, the Noble Prophet (S) fell in prostration to Allah and all beings including jinn and mankind did the same.

It should be borne in mind sijda:

(***"that falling in prostration***)

reflects humbleness and 'ibada

(***"worship"***)

designates obedience to Allah.

The former falls into two types: those reflected by bodily postures as the same is reflected in prayers and the other type constitutes the permanent and inward prostration and the same is solely possible for one whose heart is subjugated by Divine Grandeur, Greatness, and Glory and whose soul has attained to the exalted state of closeness to God Almighty.

Such person is humble and stands in awe of Divine Greatness inwardly and outwardly at all times. He is the true example of those who inwardly fall in prostration to Allah and worship Him. It is worthy of note that falling in prostration to Allah and worshipping Him may cure man of arrogance and vanity.

O Lord! We invoke you to shed the Light of Your Knowledge upon our hearts so that we worship none but You and we fall in prostration to none but You.

1. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 76, p. 49.
2. Tafsir Rahnama; Durr al-Manthur; and other exegetic works under the blessed Verse in question.
3. 37:133-139
4. 37:137-138
5. Tafsir Makhzan al-Asrar; Manhaj al-Sadiqin, under the blessed Verse in question.

Surah al-Qamar, Chapter 54, Verses 1 - 32

(The Moon)
Section (juz'): 27
Number of Verses: 55

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The blessed Chapter has 55 Verses and was revealed in Mecca. The designation of the Chapter derives from the raising the question of Cleaving of the Moon (shaqq al-qamar). All the blessed Verses of the Chapter in question end in the letter r.

The preceding Chapter ended with the question of Resurrection and the blessed Chapter 55 opens with the same. The Chapter mainly treats of Resurrection, Prophethood, and an account of Prophets' opponents. The accounts of five peoples, namely those of Noah (as), 'Ad, Thamud, Lot (as), and Pharoah are being referred to in this Chapter.

Merits of the Recitation of the Chapter

According to a tradition narrated from the Noble Prophet (S)

"One who recites Surah al-Qamar and perseveres will enter the Plain of Judgment in splendor on the Day of Resurrection on the condition that he acts upon Qur'anic Injunctions."

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

اقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ

وَإِن يَرَوْا آيَةً يُعْرِضُوا وَيَقُولُوا سِحْرٌ مُّسْتَمِرٌّ

وَكَذَّبُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءهُمْ وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُّسْتَقِرٌّ

1. The Hour has drawn near and the moon has been cleft asunder.
2. And if they see a miracle, they turn away, saying: "This is continuous magic."
***3. They belied** [**Divine Verses**] **and followed their own desires. And every matter will have a place** [**for its own**].*

The first blessed Verse treats of two significant happenings. Firstly, mention is made of Resurrection drawing near entailing the most significant alteration in the world of creation serving as an opening to a new life in the other world, a world whose greatness and extent are indescribable and unintelligible to us, the captives of the mundane world.

Resurrection is inevitable and close to us. The life of this world is so transient and man is supposed to be attentive and prepare the provision for the Hereafter. Secondly, the blessed Verse deals with the great miracle of Cleaving of the Moon bearing witness to Divine Omnipotence over all things serving as a token of the veracity of the Prophetic Call. God Almighty says that Resurrection draws near and the moon cleft asunder.

The question of the Cleaving of the Moon is recurrently mentioned in Shi'i and Sunni tradition sources, according to which, disbelievers asked the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) to cleave the moon asunder because they imagined that magic and sorcery could not affect the heaven and if the moon happened to cleave asunder, Prophet Muhammad's (S) task could definitely be regarded as a miracle.

It is worthy of note that separation of the planets of the solar system off the sun and/or meteors reflect the possibility of the moon cleaving asunder. It is interesting to note that Cleaving of the Moon occurred at night without prior proclamation as to the same while people were asleep.

The travelers proceeding toward Mecca and Syria and even Indians could witness Cleaving of the Moon.[1] It is inscribed on some monuments in India that the completion date of those monuments was the time when the moon cleft asunder.

According to Muslim consensus, consecutively transmitted traditions, and the testimonies of many a Prophetic Companion, people witnessed Cleaving of the Moon. According to Tabarsi, 'Abd Allah ibn Mas'ud, Anas ibn Malik, Hudhayfa, Ibn 'Abbas, Jubayr ibn Mat'am, and 'Abd Allah ibn 'Umar witnessed Cleaving of the Moon and bore witness to the same.

According to Tabarsi, it is also narrated from Ibn 'Abbas that disbelievers got together one night in full moon and asked the Noble Prophet (S):

"If your claim to Prophethood is true, command the moon to cleave asunder into two halves."

The Noble Prophet (S) inquired:

"If I do so, would you believe?"

They replied:

"Yes."

Then the Noble Prophet (S) invoked God Almighty to command the moon to cleave asunder into two halves. The Noble Prophet (S) summoned disbelievers and asked them to observe Cleaving of the Moon.

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud that he said:

"By Allah in Whose Hand of Might rests my soul, I witnessed the Mount of Hira through the two halves of the moon when it was cleft asunder."

According to Qur'an exegetes, transmitted traditions, and historical sources, there is no doubt as to Cleaving of the Moon which happened by Divine Will and the Noble Prophet's (S) miracle.[2] Sunni exegetes and traditionists maintain that Cleaving of the Moon is consecutively transmitted[3] among whom mention may be made of Suyuti quoting the same on the authority of 'Abd al-Razzaq, Ahmad, 'Abd ibn Humayd, Muslim, Ibn Jurayr, Ibn al-Mundhar, Tirmidhi, Ibn Murdiwayh, Bayhaqi[4], and Qurtubi[5].

Other sources have transmitted the same on their authorities. It is a matter of consensus and is free from doubt. The sources are not mentioned herein for the sake of brevity.

The second blessed Verse is saying that when obdurate disbelievers witness the miracle proving the veracity of your Prophetic Call turn away saying that it is a magic repeated. The Arabic word mustamirr (continuous, repeated) reflects that they had repeatedly seen miracles worked by the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) such that Cleaving of the Moon was another. Although such false ascription was a pretext for their disobedience to Truth.

Alluding to their opposition and its inauspicious consequences, the blessed Verse 3 is saying that they belied and followed their concupiscent desires and

"every matter will have a place [***for its own***]***."***

The point is that their denial of the Prophetic Call, the Noble Prophet's (S) miracles, and their denial of Resurrection sprang from their following concupiscent desires, since their prejudice, obduracy, and arrogance impeded their submission to Truth.

On the other hand, their lust for unconditional deriving pleasures of the flesh and their impurities stemming from committing sins and doing wrong served as obstacles in acknowledging the Call to Truth, since such acknowledgement entailed obligations. It has been always likewise and it will remain the same. The worst obstacle on the path toward Truth is following concupiscent desires.

"Every matter will have a place [for its own]"

designates that everyone will receive the Reward and Recompense of his own deeds. The good shall reap Rewards and the evil shall suffer the evil consequences of their vile deeds.

The expression seemingly makes a reference to the truth that nothing shall be effaced in this world, but any good or evil act shall stay the same until man receives his Reward or Recompense of the same. It is worthy of note that the shadows of night will end in the bright of the day and Truth shall be established on its stable place.

The Holy Qur'an says elsewhere6:

"Therefore, one who does righteous good deeds equal to the weight of an atom shall see it. And one who does evil equal to the weight of an atom shall see it."

It is narrated from Imam Baqir (as):

*"No servant shall be afflicted by any affliction unless he has committed sins."*7

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 4-6

وَلَقَدْ جَاءهُم مِّنَ الْأَنبَاء مَا فِيهِ مُزْدَجَرٌ

حِكْمَةٌ بَالِغَةٌ فَمَا تُغْنِ النُّذُرُ

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ يَدْعُ الدَّاعِ إِلَى شَيْءٍ نُّكُرٍ

4. And indeed there has come unto them news wherein there is to cease disbelief,
5. Perfect wisdom, but the words of the warners benefit the obdurate not.
6. Therefore, turn away from them. The Day that the Caller shall call [them] to a terrible thing and torment of Hell.

The Arabic word naba' is applied a piece of news which has three characteristics. Firstly, the subject matter happens to be of significant occurrence, as any piece of news is not termed naba'. Secondly, knowledge and/or certitude is accrued of the same. Thirdly, the issue is true devoid of untruth.8

The Arabic word muzdajar derives from z-j-r ("drive back, hold back") which connotes the news that may impede man from committing sins. In other words, accounts of the ancients and their desperation and torments contain significant news embodying warning and disgust for believers.

The blessed Verse 5 is saying that the Holy Qur'an is wisdom par excellence in terms of eloquence, which resumes the points discussed in the preceding Verses.

As it was mentioned above, it may make a reference to the point that Cleaving asunder of the Moon at a certain time, all the miracles of the Prophets and the torment of the damned unfortunate (ashqiya') as the Recompense of their deeds, and all other happenings that occurred at other times owing to the Preordination of the Most Exalted Lord constitute Wisdom par excellence.

"But the words of the warners benefit them not"

may allude to the fact that such obdurate, arrogant, and ignorant people were not convinced to believe by such significant miracle but they regarded it as magic and remained in their disbelief and animosity.

In short, all these blessed Verses indicate that Cleaving of the Moon at the command of the Seal of the Prophets (S) was done to bear witness to the veracity of his Prophetic Call and the same was worked according to the order of the world of creation.

Addressed to the Noble Prophet (S), the blessed Verse 6 is saying that when disbelievers witnessed such great miracle but failed to believe, you are supposed to withdraw from them without taking troubles for their ignorance but remember the Day when the Divine Caller calls people unto a horrible thing – the Call to Record of deeds. It is worthy of note that the Arabic word nukur designates something horrible and unbeknownst.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 7-8

خُشَّعًا أَبْصَارُهُمْ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ كَأَنَّهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُّنتَشِرٌ

مُّهْطِعِينَ إِلَى الدَّاعِ يَقُولُ الْكَافِرُونَ هَٰذَا يَوْمٌ عَسِرٌ

7. They will come forth with humbled eyes from graves as if they were locusts scattered,
8. Hastening with erect necks towards the Caller. The disbelievers will say: "This is a hard Day."

The Arabic word ajdath is the plural form of jadath ("grave, tomb"). Humbling of eyes is a token of intensity of fear or shamefulness leading to humbleness. The similitude of sinners on the Day of Resurrection to scattered locusts reflects their perplexity and astonishment upon coming out of graves hastening hither and thither out of witnessing the torment on that Day.

The blessed Verse 8 is saying that when they leave their graves upon the Call, they protrude their necks toward Calling angels out of the intensity of fear. The Arabic word muhti'in derives from h-t-' ("protrude one's neck").

Some exegetes interpret the word in the sense of gazing or hastening. Both senses are possible in the interpretation of the blessed Verse, though the former sense is seemingly more appropriate herein, since when a horrible sound is heard, man immediately protrudes his neck and then turns toward the source of the sound.

It is worthy of note that the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse in question may refer to all these senses. Thus, upon hearing the Divine Caller, they protrude their necks toward the source of the sound, then gaze at it, and later on hasten toward it and make their presence at Divine Tribunal. Then, the horror of the hard incidents of that Day encompasses them all.

Thus, the blessed Verse proceeds to add that disbelievers say that that today is a hard and excruciating. It is a hard day since all the things cause fear in sinners. May God Almighty bestow His Mercy upon His servants. On that Day, there shall be neither fear nor grief for believers.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 9-10

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مَجْنُونٌ وَازْدُجِرَ

فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانتَصِرْ

9. The people of Noah (as) denied [him] before the disbelievers denying the Noble Prophet (S). They denied Our servant and besides denial of his Prophethood said: "A madman!" and that he was far from the true path.
10. Then Noah (as) invoked his Lord [saying]: "I have been overcome, so render [me] assistance!"

God Almighty consoles the Noble Prophet (S) saying that if disbelievers denied your Prophetic Call and miracles, do not entertain sorrow since people in aforetime were the same. The people of Prophet Noah (as) did so many wrongs to the Archprophet (as) and transgressed the bounds to such an extent that they attributed madness and ignorance to him.

They even threatened that they would kill him as it is reflected elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[9]:

"They said: 'If you cease not, O Noah (as), you will surely be among those stoned to death.'"

Finally, he was desperate of guiding them and said unto God Almighty that neither such people nor their offspring may be guided.

Thus, according to the blessed Verse 10, Noah (as) said:

"I am overcome, render me assistance."

Following nine hundred and fifty years of imparting Divine Guidance, his people, except for a small number, denied his Prophetic Call. Further, they transgressed the bounds to such extent that he was desperate and called his Lord saying that he could not guide them to the Straight Path and invoked him to take his vengeance upon them. Then, God Almighty answered his prayer as a consequence of which the torment of tempest encompassed them.

Surah al-Qamar – Verses 11-12

فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاء بِمَاء مُّنْهَمِرٍ

وَفَجَّرْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَالْتَقَى الْمَاء عَلَى أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ

11. Therefore, We opened the gates of the heavens with water pouring forth.
12. And We caused springs to gush forth from the earth. Therefore, the waters from the earth and the heaven joined for a matter preordained.

The blessed Verses make a telling and awe-inspiring reference to the manner of their torment saying that following Noah's (as) invocation, We opened the gates of the heaven and an incessant and heavy rain poured down.

The metaphor of opening the gates of the heaven is a beautiful one which is employed at the time of pouring down heavy rain. The metaphor is also used in the Persian tongue when it is said that it is as if the gates of heaven have opened and all the rain is pouring down.

The Arabic word munhamir ("pouring down, flowing down") derives from h-m-r ("pour down, flow") connoting heavy pouring down of rain or flowing of tears. The word is also figuratively employed to connote milking animals to the last drop. It would be of interest to know that according to some exegetes, they had been afflicted with famine for years and expected rain until a fatal rain, rather than a rejuvenating one, poured down.

The blessed Verse 12 is saying that such heavy rain poured down that water gushed forth from the earth, as reflected in the blessed Verse in question. God Almighty cleft the earth asunder and made many a spring gush forth from the same. The two waters intermingled as it was preordained and encompassed all over the earth.

In short, water gushed forth from all over the earth and springs flowed and a heavy rain poured forth and the waters met and formed an immense and agitating ocean.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 13-14

وَحَمَلْنَاهُ عَلَى ذَاتِ أَلْوَاحٍ وَدُسُرٍ

تَجْرِي بِأَعْيُنِنَا جَزَاء لِّمَن كَانَ كُفِرَ

13. And We carried him on a** [**vessel**] **made of planks and nails,
14. The vessel upon which Noah** (**as**) **and his followers embarked Floated under Our Eyes. It was a Reward for him who had been denied.

The blessed twain Verses in question let go of the account of the tempest, since what had to be said is contained in the preceding blessed Verses.

Proceeding with the account of Noah's Ark, the blessed Verse 13 reads:

"We carried him on a** [**vessel**] **made of planks and nails."

According to Raghib's Mufradat, the Arabic word dasur, the plural form of disar, originally denotes "shove, push off severely." Since nails are hammered with heavy strikes into the wood and the like, it is called disar. However, some exegetes maintain that the word designates rope, applied to the ropes of the sail and the like.

It is worthy of note that the Qur'anic expression employed herein is meaningful and significant, since it reflects that in such harsh tempest encompassing everything, We commanded some pieces of wood and some nails to rescue Noah (as) and his followers and these inanimate objects fulfilled their obligation in the best manner and the same reflects Divine Omnipotence.

The expression may also allude to the simplicity of the vessels of that time in comparison with modern sophisticated vessels. Nonetheless, according to historical sources, Noah's (as) Ark was sufficiently large for whose building he spent years and it could accommodate one pair of different animals.

The blessed Verse 14 is a reference to the special Favor bestowed upon Noah (as) by God Almighty saying that the Ark cleaves waves asunder before Our Eyes and under Our Supervision.

"Before Our Eyes"

is a delicate metaphorical expression alluding to special attention to and perfect preservation of something, as it is elsewhere[10] attested in the Holy Qur'an:

"And build the vessel under Our Eyes and with Our Revelation and call not upon Me on behalf of those who did wrong; they shall certainly be drowned."

The blessed Verse 14 further adds:

"It was a Reward for him who had been denied."

Prophet Noah (as) like all other Prophets enjoyed the Great Favors and Bounties of the Lord, but ignorant disbelievers denied his Prophetic Call.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 15-16

وَلَقَد تَّرَكْنَاهَا آيَةً فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ

15. And Verily, We left the vessel as a Sign. Then is there any that will receive admonition?
16. Then how terrible is My Torment and My Warning?

In these twain blessed Verses, God Almighty is saying that He made the account of Noah's Tempest and Ark and the perdition of disbelievers at the time remain until the Day of Resurrection such that it may serve as warning and admonition for all peoples and they learn that denying Messengers of Allah entails evil consequences.

The blessed Verse 15 is saying:

"Is there anyone who will receive admonition out of such all-encompassing torment and learn the manner of My torment in store for disbelievers and contenders?"

Surah al-Qamar - Verse 17

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ

17. And We have verily made the Qur'an easy to understand and receive admonition. Then, is there anyone who will receive admonition?

The blessed Verse in question is saying that God Almighty truly made the Holy Qur'an easy to understand, such that anyone may easily comprehend the words and expressions therein and thereby find the path toward his happiness.

Thus, people may learn the accounts of former peoples like Prophet Noah's (as) tempest and Ark and the perdition of all peoples all over the earth except for his followers. Thus, they may learn the

Recompense of their evil deeds and take a lesson.

Now, is there anyone who remembers God Almighty and receive admonition? It is in this vein that people may reflect upon the horror of torment in this world and attain to felicity. It is worthy of note that not everybody deserves to benefit from Qur'anic Verses since it is solely for those who remember God Almighty rather than those who are immersed in neglect.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 18-19

كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي يَوْمِ نَحْسٍ مُّسْتَمِرٍّ

18. The people of 'Ad belied their Prophet. Then how were My Torment and My Warnings?
19. Indeed, We recurrently sent against them a furious and icy gale on an inauspicious day.

Following the account of Prophet Noah (as) and the tempest, the Holy Qur'an proceeds with those of Prophet Hod (as) and the people of 'Ad so that it makes people aware of the manner of the torment of those who disobeyed Divine Command.

Although the people of 'Ad were strong, robust, and of high stature such that they extracted rocks from mountains and built their houses, they were afflicted with Divine torment in the form of an incessant icy gale on an inauspicious day. The inauspicious day mentioned herein may reflect Divine torment encompassing disbelievers on that day and led to their perdition.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 20-22

تَنزِعُ النَّاسَ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ مُّنقَعِرٍ

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ

20. A harsh gale plucking out men as if they were eradicated stems of date-palms.
21. Then, how are My Torment and My Warning?
22. And indeed We made the Holy Qur'an facile to comprehend and remember. Then is there

anyone who will receive admonition?

Depicting the aforesaid gale, the Holy Qur'an is saying that it plucked down people like the uprooted trunks of palm-trees and scatters them hither and thither. The Arabic word munqa'ir deriving from q-'-r designates the lowest point of anything though it is employed in the sense of 'eradicate.'

The expression may allude that the people of 'Ad were strong and robust and as some exegetes say they had built underground shelters in order to preserve themselves from gales, but the gale blew so harshly that day that it eradicated them from their shelters and scattered them around. It is also said that the gale struck them unto the earth head down that their heads were severed.

The Arabic word a'jaz is the plural form of 'ijz denoting the lower or rear part of something and their similitude to the lower parts of palm-tree trunks is owing to the point that the gale was so harsh that their limbs were severed and scattered into the air and then their bodies were uprooted from the earth and were scattered hither and thither. It may also connote that the harshly blowing gale pounded them onto the earth head down and broke their necks and severed their heads.

The blessed Verse 21 is warning that people may see how Divine torment and warnings were. God Almighty thus chastised other peoples who trod the path of denial, arrogance, vanity, sinfulness, and rebellion. What do you think that you proceed on their path?

The blessed Verse 22 is saying that God Almighty made the Holy Qur'an facile to comprehend and derive admonitions thereof. Is there anyone who remembers God Almighty and receives admonition? Is there anyone listening to the Divine Call and Warnings?

It is worthy of note that the clause;

"Then how was My Torment and Warnings?"

is reiterated as to the people of 'Ad – once in the beginning of the account and once at the close of it. The difference might lie in the fact that their torment was more severe and more horrible, though all Divine torments are severe.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 23-26

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِالنُّذُرِ

فَقَالُوا أَبَشَرًا مِّنَّا وَاحِدًا نَّتَّبِعُهُ إِنَّا إِذًا لَّفِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ

أَؤُلْقِيَ الذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِن بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَشِرٌ

سَيَعْلَمُونَ غَدًا مَّنِ الْكَذَّابُ الْأَشِرُ

23. Thamud belied the warners.
24. And they inquired: "Should we obey one single man amongst us? Truly then we should be deeply [***entangled with***] ***in error and madness!"***
25. Is it that he is the only one from amongst us who receives Revelation? Nay, he is an very arrogant and a liar!"
26. Tomorrow they will come to know who is the liar, the arrogant one!

The people of Thamud are the third people whose account is precisely mentioned as a lesson. They inhabited in the land of Hijr, in the northern region of Hijaz. Their Prophet Salih (as) made his utmost effort to guide them onto the Straight Path, but his efforts were of no avail. They denied Divine Warnings.

The Arabic word nudhur herein connotes warning Prophets and the denial of the Prophetic Call by the people of Thamud is regarded as that of all the Prophets, since the Prophetic Calls of all Prophets were consistent. Nonetheless, the Arabic word nudhur is herein the plural form of indhar denoting statements made accompanied by warning which are naturally included in the words of any Prophet.

The second Verse in question treats of their pretexts as to their denial of the Prophetic Call saying:

"They said: 'Should we follow a man of our community? If we do so, we will be in error and entangled with madness.'"

Arrogance and vanity served as veils between them and Prophetic Calls. They said that Prophet Salih (as) was a man like them. Thus, it would be in vain to follow him. What are his privileges over us so that we should follow his commands? Astray peoples often found the same fault with Prophets saying that they are people like us for which reason they may not be Divinely appointed Prophets.

The Arabic word su‘ur is the plural for of sa‘ir originally denoting blazing fire but it is employed at times in the sense of madness as well, since madmen are imbued with special excitement. Thus, naqa mas‘ura is applied to mad camel. It is worthy of note that the plural form su‘ur connotes emphasis and permanence, be it in respect to madness or as to setting fire ablaze.

In the third blessed Verse disbelievers are saying that taken for granted that Divine Revelation be sent to a certain man, would he be the only one receiving it where there are people enjoying more recognition, fame, and possessions?

They also say that he is an arrogant liar desiring to rule over them. The ignorant solely regard the form but are totally ignorant of significance and truth. Narrow minded people have always regarded Prophets human beings like them and have been ignorant of their spiritual truth.

They have been unaware of the their inward precious jewels thereby they are connected to the spiritual world and that of Divine Command and are prepared to receive Divine Revelation. It is through the nexus that they receive Divine Favors and impart the same unto their peoples. Therefore, they regarded Prophets liars. It is worthy of note that the Arabic word ashir connotes exuberance accompanied with lustfulness.

The fourth blessed Verse in question thus provides disbelievers with a reply saying that it will be known tomorrow as to who the lustful liar is. Divine torment will strike them into a handful of dust and ashes and Divine Chastisement shall entangle them in the Hereafter. Such false accusations may not befit Prophets but are worthy of disbelievers.

Surah al-Qamar - Verse 27

إِنَّا مُرْسِلُو النَّاقَةِ فِتْنَةً لَّهُمْ فَارْتَقِبْهُمْ وَاصْطَبِرْ

27. Indeed, We are sending the she-camel as a test for them. Therefore, we said unto Salih (as) to watch their end and be patient!

The people of Thamud went to the extreme in denying Prophet Salih's (as) Prophetic Call and said unto him derisively:

"If you are a Prophet, command the mount to send forth a red haired ten month pregnant camel and we share the water with her such that she may drink the water and provide us with milk and the next day we use the water."

To try them God Almighty granted their wish and it was through Divine Will and Omnipotence that a red haired and ten month pregnant camel came out of the mount thus addressing Prophet Salih (as):

"Watch and be patient so that you see what they will do to the she-camel."

Surah al-Qamar - Verse 28

وَنَبِّئْهُمْ أَنَّ الْمَاءَ قِسْمَةٌ بَيْنَهُمْ كُلُّ شِرْبٍ مُّحْتَضَرٌ

28. And We inform them that the water is to be shared between them and the she-camel, each one of them receive the allotted share.

Addressed to Prophet Salih (as), the blessed Verse in question is asking him to inform the people of Thamud that they should divide the water between themselves and the she-camel. There was seemingly a fountain whose water sufficed to provide the people inhabiting the region with water.

The people of Thamud were assigned to make use of the water one day and leave it to the she-camel the next day and receive milk from her in return. However, they rejected the offer and suffered the evil consequences of their deeds and it will be reflected in the following Verses.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 29-30

فَنَادَوْا صَاحِبَهُمْ فَتَعَاطَى فَعَقَرَ

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ

***29. But they called their comrade and he took** [**a sword**] **and slew** [**her**].*
30. Then, how is My Torment and My Warnings?

The disobedient, vain, and obdurate people made up their minds to slay the she-camel though Prophet Salih (as) had warned them that if they harm her in any way, they would be afflicted with torment.

But, they ignored his warning and called one of their comrades and asked him to slay the she-camel. The Arabic word sahib may herein allude to one of the chiefs of the people of ‘Ad who was one of their most notorious scoundrels named in historical accounts as Qadara ibn Salif. He was an ugly villain and one of the most inauspicious people of the time.

The Arabic word ta‘ati originally denotes handling something or embarking upon some act, but it also connotes fulfilling significant, perilous, toilsome, and profitable tasks. It is worthy of not that all these interpretations are possible in the blessed Verse in question, since embarking upon slaying the she-camel required audacity.

Furthermore, it was toilsome and naturally entailed remuneration. The Arabic word ‘aqar is cognate with ‘uqr originally denoting root and basis, but employed as to camels, it connotes slaying or cutting sinews. Different reports exist as to the manner of slaying the she-camel. Some maintain that her sinews were severed with sword.

Some hold that Qadara lay in ambush behind a rock and shot her with an arrow and then attacked her with a sword. The following blessed Verse in question opens the account of the horrible torment of the disobedient people: "Now observe the manner of My Torment and Warnings."

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 31-32

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَكَانُوا كَهَشِيمِ الْمُحْتَظِرِ

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ

31. Indeed, as the Recompense of their crime, We sent against them an awful cry and the lightning and they became like the stalks scattered in a pen by cattle owners.
32. And verily, We have made the Qur'an easy to understand and remember. Then is there anyone who will receive admonition?

The blessed Verse 31 is saying that God Almighty sent a horrible cry upon them; as a consequence of which, they turned into dried up and mashed plants gathered as fodder for cattle by their owners. The Arabic word sayha ad hoc denotes a loud cry from the heaven and it may connote the awe-inspiring lightning flashing above their city.

The word hashim denotes fragile things like stalks. The word is employed ad hoc in the sense of such stalks flailed and prepared as fodder by cattle owners. It is also applied to the stalks scattered beneath them. The Arabic word muhtadir is applied to one who gathers dried plants to feed his cattle.

The metaphorical expression employed in the blessed Verse in question regarding the torment of the people of Thamud is quite wondrous and meaningful, since God Almighty did not send hosts from the heaven and the earth to cause the perdition of the disobedient people, but smashed everything within a wide expanse solely through a loud cry heard from the heaven, an awe-inspiring lightning, an enormous explosion.

Their prosperous palaces and mansions turned into cattle fodder and their corpses became like flailed plants scattered beneath cattle. Comprehension of such meaning was rather hard for former peoples, but it is not thus today owing to awareness as to the aftermath of explosions shattering everything within their scopes.

It is however worthy of note that the Lightning of Divine Torment is not to be compared to such explosions and thus it becomes evident that such awe-inspiring lightning inflicted what a massive disaster upon such disobedient people.

The second blessed Verse in question asks whether such admonitory and excruciating fate is not sufficient to awaken mankind. Is there anyone who receives admonition out of the Holy Qur'an and its vivid and crystal clear expressions, accounts, and warnings?

1. A building was ruined in Beijing, the capital of China, on whose pillars it was inscribed that it had been erected in the second year after the Cleaving of the Moon (Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 24, p. 11).
2. See Shi'i and Sunni exegetic sources including: Majma' al-Bayan; Tafsir Burhan; Tafsir Safi; Tafsir Nur al-Thisqalayn; Tafsir Nimuna; Tafsir Makhzan al-'Irfan; Tafsir Nur; Atyab al-Bayan; Tafsir al-Mizan.
3. Tafsir Durr al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 133.
4. in Dala'il
5. transmitting on the authority of Anas
6. 99:7-8

7. Usul Kafi, vol. 2, p. 269.
8. Raghib's Mufradat.
9. 26:116
10. 11:37

Surah al-Qamar, Verses 33 - 55

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 33-35

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ بِالنُّذُرِ

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حَاصِبًا إِلاَّ آلَ لُوطٍ نَّجَّيْنَاهُم بِسَحَرٍ

نِعْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِنَا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي مَن شَكَرَ

33. The people of Lot (as) belied the Warnings.
34. Indeed, We sent against them a violent gale along with stones, except the family of Lot (as), them We saved in the last hour of the night,
35. The rescue was a Favor from Us. Thus We reward him who gives thanks.

The second blessed Verse in question is saying that the people of Lot (as) denied their Prophet's (as) Prophetic Call and Revelation; as a consequence of which Divine Torment was sent down upon them in the form of a harsh gale pouring down stones over them. The Arabic word hasib is employed in the sense of violent gale moving sand and stones.

All the people of Prophet Lot (as) perished by that harsh gale with the exception of the family of Prophet Lot (as) who were rescued at dawn. The third blessed Verse is saying that the deliverance of the family of Prophet Lot (as) was a Divine Favor. The blessed Verse closes by saying that God Almighty thus rewards those who are thankful.

It is a reference to the fact that one who does not disobey God Almighty as a token of gratitude for His Favors and Bounties, but obeys Divine Commands and His Messengers, will find Divine Support and Assistance at all times in the face of hardships and vicissitudes in this world and the Hereafter.

Surah al-Qamar - Verse 36

وَلَقَدْ أَنذَرَهُم بَطْشَتَنَا فَتَمَارَوْا بِالنُّذُرِ

36. And Lot (as) indeed had warned them of Our Wrath, but they were engaged in disputes regarding Our Warnings!

Prophet Lot (as) strove to warn his people of Divine Torment, but they entertained doubts regarding his Prophetic Call and Divine Revelation and ignored warnings and persisted in committing their vicious deeds until they were afflicted by Divine Torment.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 37-39

وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدُوهُ عَن ضَيْفِهِ فَطَمَسْنَا أَعْيُنَهُمْ فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ

وَلَقَدْ صَبَّحَهُم بُكْرَةً عَذَابٌ مُّسْتَقِرٌّ

فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ

37. And they indeed sought to shame his guests through conversing with each other. Therefore, We blinded their eyes. Then taste My Torment and My Warnings."
38. And indeed an abiding torment seized them early in the morning.
39. "Then taste My Torment and My Warnings."

The people of Prophet Lot (as) went to the extreme in transgressing bounds. Qur'an exegetes report that a number of angels entered Prophet Lot's (as) home in human form with beauteous and resplendent visages.

The people of Prophet Lot (as) intended to enter his home and derive pleasure out of their company asking the Prophet (as) to leave them unto them and entered into disputes with the Prophet (as). Prophet Lot (as) provided them with wise counsels against their will but it was of no avail. They shattered the gate and entered his home.

Upon their insistence as to transgressing bounds, Gabriel said unto Prophet Lot (as) to leave his people unto them. Upon their entrance, Gabriel struck its pinion onto their eyes and blinded them such that no traces were left of their eyes. The disobedient people rose and stumbled in perplexity and shouted that Lot (as) had cast his spell unto them.

The second and the third blessed Verses are saying that when the people of Prophet Lot (as) went to the extreme in their disobedience and rebellion, they were afflicted with a permanent torment such that they all perished and were sent to Hellfire.

Then it was said unto them:

"Taste the torment regarding which Our Messenger, Lot (as), had warned you but you belied his warning."

Surah al-Qamar - Verse 40

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ

40. And indeed, We have made the Qur'an easy to comprehend. Then is there anyone who will receive admonition?"

The blessed Verse 40 reiterates the meaningful and awakening statement:

"We have made the Holy Qur'an facile to understand. Then, is there anyone who will receive admonition and remember it?"

Nonetheless, the people of Prophet Lot (as) failed to receive admonition neither from Warnings nor from torments. Now, will those who are impure by committing the same sins, regret their vicious deeds and repent?

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 41-42

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَ آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ النُّذُرُ

كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا كُلِّهَا فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ أَخْذَ عَزِيزٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ

41. And verily, warners came unto the people of Pharaoh.
42. But, they belied all Our miracles. Therefore, We seized them with a Seizure of the All-Mighty, the Omnipotent.

The fifth and the last people mentioned in this series of blessed Verses are the people of Pharaoh. However, a brief reference is made thereof since the account of the people of Pharaoh is mentioned in detail in different Qur'anic Chapters.

The blessed Verse 41 is saying that Divinely appointed warners came unto them one after the other. The people of Pharaoh does not only include his family and kith and kin but it encompasses all his followers as well, since although the Arabic word al is often used in the sense of family but it may also be employed in a general sense.

The contextual meaning of the blessed Verse in question makes a reference to the latter sense. The Arabic word nudhur is the plural form of nadhir denoting "warner." Nadhir may be either a human being or an incident warning mankind against the consequences of their deeds.

The former sense may herein allude to Moses (as) and Aaron and the latter one may make a reference to the nine miracles worked by Prophet Moses (as). However, the following blessed Verse reflects that the latter sense is being intended.

The blessed Verse 42 exposes the reaction of the people of Pharaoh against the two eminent Prophets (as) and their warnings saying that the people of Pharaoh denied Divine Signs. These arrogant wrong-doers belied all Divine Signs unexceptionally and regarded all of them as lies, magic, or coincidence.

The blessed Verses in question encompass a wide range of meanings including intellectual and narrational arguments and miracles. However, taking into account another blessed Verse[1] according to which God Almighty provided Moses (as) with nine crystal clear miracles, it becomes evident that these miracles are being intended herein.

Witnessing only one of these miracles with prior notice and then removal of the affliction through the Prophet's (as) invocation will suffice to convince the truth seeking man. But if one happens to be obdurate, all the miracles of the earth and the heaven may not suffice to convince him. It is at such time that only Divine Torment should be inflicted upon disobedient people and shatters their brains.

As it is mentioned in the blessed Verse in question;

"We seized them and chastised them"

and the seizure is done by One who may not be vanquished since He is All-Mighty and Omnipotent.

The expression mentioned in this account in unprecedented in others since the people of Pharaoh were above all proud of their might and rank and their sovereignty was well-known. However, God Almighty is saying that He seized them by His Might so that it may be known to all that such groundless might and grandeur is nothing against Divine Omnipotence and Glory.

It is a source of surprise that the great Nile, the source of their mighty, wealth, prosperity, and civilization was Divinely appointed to cause their perdition. It is even more surprising that small beings like locusts, frogs, and a kind of insect called qumal vanquished them rendering them desperate and led to their perdition.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 43-44

أَكُفَّارُكُمْ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أُوْلَئِكُمْ أَمْ لَكُم بَرَاءةٌ فِي الزُّبُرِ

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ نَحْنُ جَمِيعٌ مُّنتَصِرٌ

43. Are your disbelievers better than these? Or have you immunity in the Divine Scriptures?
44. Or they say: "We are a great multitude backing each other and no might may conquer us."

After recounting the accounts of the ancients and the torments and chastisements of disobedient sinful peoples, the blessed Verses in question address Meccan polytheists asking them:

"Are you disbelievers better than those of the ancients? Is there immunity and quarter for you in Divinely revealed Scriptures? Is there any difference between you and the peoples of Pharaoh, Lot (as), and Thamud? They were afflicted with tempests, earthquakes, and lightning owing to their disbelief, disobedience, wrong-doing and sinfulness.

Why do you imagine that you will not suffer the same fate? Are you better than them or your disobedience, animosity, and disbelief less than theirs? Why do you think that you are immune from Divine Torment? Do you have a quarter attested in Divine Scriptures? Such claim is indubitably untrue and you have no evidence to prove it."

According to the second blessed Verse, they say that they are a great united multitude who take vengeance upon their enemies and conquering them. The Arabic word jami' in this blessed Verse is applied to a community who possess mighty and proceed toward a goal.

The word muntasir lays further emphasis on the same meaning since it denotes triumphant and taking vengeance. It would be of interest to note that the preceding blessed Verse was in the form of address, but the blessed Verse in question and the following ones speak about disbelievers in the third person which connotes a kind of humility, namely they do not deserve to be addressed by God Almighty any further.

In short, if they claim to possess such might, it is groundless, since the peoples of Pharaoh, Thamud, 'Ad, and the like of them were mightier than them, but they could not resist in the least against Divine Torment dispersing them like a violent tempest blowing onto hay, let alone such insignificant and desperate people.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 45-46

سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ

بَلِ السَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَدْهَى وَأَمَرُّ

45. Their multitude will be put to flight soon and they will show their backs unto each other.
46. Nay, but the Day of Resurrection is their appointed time and that Day will be more grievous and bitterer.

In order to refute their false claims, the blessed Verses in question decisively predicts them so that they know that their multitude will be soon defeated and they will show their back. It would of interest to know that the verbal form sayuhzamu ("they will be soon defeated") originally denotes pressing a dried up object such that it is shattered but it is figuratively employed in the sense of defeating and shattering hosts.

The expression may allude to the point that although they seem to be unified but they are inflexible and may be shattered by a heavy pressure. Au contraire, believers are unified but flexible and may thereby resists hardships and vicissitudes.

It is also worthy of note that the Arabic word dubur ("rear") is the opposite of qubul ("front") and the former is herein employed to indicate show one's back in battlefield. Such prediction realized in battles like Badr and finally the seemingly mighty hosts of disbelievers were defeated and put to flight.

The second blessed Verse is saying that defeat and misfortune do not fall into their share in this world but their appointed place shall be the Day of Resurrection when more horrible and bitterer chastisements shall be in store for them. Thus, they should await a bitter defeat in this world and a bitterer and more horrible defeat in the Hereafter.

The superlative adjective adha

(***"more grievous"***)

connotes that they shall be entangled with an incurable affliction. Finally, it is known that one of the aspects of the inimitability of the Holy Qur’an is inclusion of news of the Unseen an instance of which is to be found in the blessed Verse in question. Is such news from the Unseen with such decisiveness and explicitness not regarded as a miracle?

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 47-49

إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ

يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُونَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ ذُوقُوا مَسَّ سَقَرَ

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ

47. Indeed, sinners are in error and blazing flames.
48. The day when Hellfire shall burn their faces, it will be said unto them: "Taste Hellfire!"
49. Indeed, We have created all things in its proper measure.

The first twain blessed Verses treat of the torments of evil-doers and sinners who may be the disbelievers warned against torment in the preceding blessed Verse or it may generally allude to those who disobey God Almighty and Divine Signs.

In short, disbelievers shall be dragged into Hell and it shall be said unto them:

"Taste the heat and hardship of saqar, one of the levels of Hell."

The third blessed Verse in question is saying that it may be imagined that theses torments are consistent with sins thus it further adds that God Almighty created everything in its due measure. Their excruciating torments in this world and the severe chastisements in the Hereafter and all creation are well measured.

The earth, the heaven, animate and inanimate beings, human limbs and organs, and all the means of life and sustenance have been created in due measure and there is nothing without measure in this world, since God Almighty is All-Wise and all His Acts are based on His Wisdom and Omniscience.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 50-51

وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلاَّ وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا أَشْيَاعَكُمْ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ

50. And Our Commandment is but a fast one as the twinkling of an eye.
51. And verily, We caused the perdition of your likes; then is there anyone who will receive

admonition?

Divine Acts are carried out Well-Measured, Wise, and Fast. Thus the blessed Verse 50 is saying that Divine Command is but One and it is done as fast as the twinkling of an eye. Whatever He wills, He merely says "Be" and it will come into being.

Even the Arabic imperative form "kun" ("be") is employed due to linguistic restrictions of human language; otherwise, Divine Will is on a par with the realization of His Will. Thus, We God Almighty issues the Command as to Resurrection, everything will be resurrected in the twinkling of an eye and new life shall be given to bodies.

Likewise, on that Day, when God Almighty wills to chastise sinners by lightning, loud cries heard from the heaven, earthquake, tempests, and harsh gales, solely one single Command shall suffices to realize everything. They all serve as Warnings to sinners that they know that God Almighty is All-Wise and His Wills are decisive so that they may be aware of the evil consequences of disobeying His Commands.

The blessed Verse 51 addresses sinners and disbelievers once more and draws their attention to the fate of ancient peoples saying that God Almighty caused the perdition of peoples who were like you aforetime. Is there anyone who will remember and receive admonition, namely awakens and takes a lesson?

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 52-53

وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَعَلُوهُ فِي الزُّبُرِ

وَكُلُّ صَغِيرٍ وَكَبِيرٍ مُسْتَطَرٌ

52. And everything they have done is noted in Records of deeds.
53. And any deed, small and large, is written down.

The blessed Verses in question makes a reference to the fundamental principle that the deeds committed by ancient peoples were not effaced following their death but whatever was done by them was recorded in the Records of their deeds; likewise your deeds are being recorded and preserved for the Day of Reckoning. The word zubur is the plural form of zabur denoting book but it is herein employed in the sense of the Record of deeds committed by mankind.

In order to lay further emphasis, the second blessed Verse adds that the Record of deeds shall be a complete and all inclusive record on the Day of Resurrection, such that upon receiving their Records of deeds, sinners shall cry:

"Woe unto us! What kind of Record is this that leaves neither a small thing nor a big thing, but has recorded it with numbers," [2].

The Arabic word mustatir ("written down, recorded") is cognate with satr ("line, queue"), originally denoting "line" be it the line of people or trees or words on a page. As it is commonly employed in the last sense, the same occurs to mind. It is another warning to such ignorant sinners.

Surah al-Qamar - Verses 54-55

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَهَرٍ

فِي مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِندَ مَلِيكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ

54. Indeed, the God fearing shall be in the midst of Gardens and Rivers.
55. In a place of truth, near the Omnipotent Lord.

The Qur'anic tradition is that it presents righteous good-doers and evil-doers, the good and the bad by comparing them, since differences become more obvious in comparison. Following a reference to the fate of wrong-doing disbelievers, the blessed Verses in question briefly allude to the happy fate of the God fearing saying that the God fearing shall abide amidst Gardens and rivers of Paradise in the expanse of Divine Favors and Bounties.

The Arabic nah(a)r denotes abundantly flowing water and at times, it connotes expanse, great favor, and resplendent light. Thus, it may allude to the expanse of divine Favors and Bounties and the light of Paradise and its vastness.

The second blessed Verse in question which is the last Verse of the Chapter further depicts the place of the God fearing:

"They abide in a place of truth, near the Omnipotent Lord."

The blessed Verse provides an interesting depiction of the place of the God fearing in which two characteristics are being enumerated. Firstly, it is the place of truth. Neither falsehood nor vanity may penetrate it. It is thoroughly true.

All Divine Promises as to Paradise shall be realized there and their veracity shall be made crystal clear. Secondly, it is close to God Almighty. The Arabic word 'ind ("near, close to") ad hoc connotes spiritual, rather than material, proximity to the Omnipotent Lord. All Favors and Bounties rest in His Sovereignty and Lordship. Thus, He shall not deprive His guests of any Favor. He is the only One Who is All-Aware of what He has prepared for them.

It would be of interest to not that the last twain Verses treat of the Bounties and Rewards of the people of Paradise.

Firstly, mention is made of the material Bounties like vast Gardens and Rivers in Paradise and secondly, mention is made of their great spiritual Reward, namely presence at the Threshold of Proximity to the Omnipotent Lord such that man is prepared at different intervals so that his soul soars on high encompassed with vitality and happiness.

Particularly, expressions like Lord, Omnipotent, and place of truth all reflect the permanence and intransience of such spiritual proximity and presence.

1. 17:101
2. 18:49

Surah al-Rahman, Chapter 55, Verses 1 - 32

(The Most Gracious)
Section (juz'): 27
Number of Verses: 78

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The Chapter has seventy eight Verses and it was reveled in Medina.

The designation of the Chapter derives from the first blessed Verse,

"the Most Gracious"

(al-Rahman), one of the Most Beautiful Names and Attributes of Allah.

Imam Kadim (as) said:

"There is a bride [*best thing*] *for everything, and that of the Qur'an is Surah al-Rahman."*1

The blessed Verse:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both* [*jinn and men*] *deny?"

is reiterated thirty three times which constitutes the most reiteration throughout the Holy Qur'an.

It would be of interest to know that the blessed Verse in questin addresses both jinn and men asking them:

"Which of the innumerable Blessings of your Lord will you deny?"

It is worthy of note that Divine Warnings were reiterated in the preceding Chapter:

(***"My Torment and Warnings"***)

and the blessed Chapter in question reiterates Blessings.

The preceding Chapter opened with an account of Resurrection and closed with Divine Omnipotence:

(***"In a seat of truth, near the Omnipotent Lord"***)

and the blessed Chapter in question opens with Divine Graciousness and closes with Divine Majesty and Honor

(***"Blessed is the Name of your Lord, the Owner of Majesty and Honor"***).

Merits of Recitation of the Chapter

Numerous traditions have been narrated regarding the merits of recitation of the Chapter,2 but we suffice to quote only one tradition.

According to a tradition narrated from the Messenger of Allah (S):

*"One who recites Surah al-Rahman shall be granted Divine Graciousness upon his inability to give thanks to Allah for all His Blessings and shall be rewarded for his gratitude against Divine Blessings."*3

Generally speaking, the blessed Chapter treats of different material and spiritual Divine Blessings bestowed upon His servants encompassing them all such that the blessed Chapter may bear the designations "Divine Graciousness" or "Divine Blessings," as a consequence of which the blessed Chapter opens with one of the Most Beautiful Divine Names and Attributes,

"the Most Gracious"

(al-Rahman) reflecting Divine encompassing Mercy and it closes with Divine Majesty and Glory.

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 1-2

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

الرَّحْمَنُ

عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

1. The Most Gracious [***Allah***]***!***
2. He taught the Qur'an.

His Messenger (S) is a Mercy;

(***"And We have sent you not but as a Mercy for the worlds*** [***jinn and mankind***]***,"***).

His Qur'an is also a Mercy;

(***"And We send down the Qur'an that which is a healing and a Mercy to those who believe,"***4).

The Divine Attribute;

"the Most Gracious"

(al-Rahman) is attested 169 times 114 instances of which are to found in the opening of Chapters

(***"In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful"***).

As mentioned above, the blessed Chapter reflects different Divine Blessings, opening with the Divine Attribute;

"the Most Gracious"

(al-Rahman), a secret of His All-Encompassing Graciousness, since were it not owing to this Attribute of His, such Blessings would not have fallen into the shares of His friends and enemies.

The blessed Verses are saying that the Most Gracious Allah taught the Holy Qur'an. Thus, the first and the most significant Blessing is mentioned as teaching the Holy Qur'an. What an appealing and significant expression. If we reflect correctly, the Glorious Qur'an is the source of all Divine Blessings and the means to attain to any Blessing and benefiting from all material and spiritual Blessings.

It is worthy of note that treating of the Divine Blessing of:

"teaching the Qur'an"

is mentioned prior to the creation of man and teaching him, but the natural order would be to first make

mention of the reverse order, namely creation of man, the Blessing of teaching man speech, and then teaching him the Holy Qur'an. However, the majesty and glory of the Glorious Qur'an necessitates the order in question.

The other point is that the blessed Verse is a response to Arab polytheists who upon hearing the Noble Prophet (S) calling them to prostrate before the Most Gracious Allah asked:

"What is Graciousness?"

("And when it is said unto them: 'Prostrate yourselves to the Most Gracious Allah!' They say: 'And what is the Most Gracious? Shall we fall down in prostration to that which you command us?' And it increases in them only aversion." 5).

The Holy Qur'an is saying that the Most Gracious Allah is One Who taught the Qur'an, created man, and taught him speech.

It is worthy of note that second to "Allah" the Divine Attribute;

"the Most Gracious"

is the most encompassing concept from amongst the Most Beautiful Attributes and Names of Allah, since we know that God Almighty possesses two kinds of Graciousness, general and specific.

The Attribute;

"the Most Gracious"

reflects His All-Encompassing Graciousness.

The Divine Attribute;

"the Most Merciful"

(Rahim) designates His specific Graciousness bestowed upon the faithful and the obedient.

It is seemingly owing to this reason that the Attribute;

"the Most Gracious"

is never applied to anyone other than God Almighty, unless it is accompanied by the word

"servant"

('abd), but

"merciful"

may be applied to others, since All-Encompassing Graciousness only belongs to God Almighty. In other words, specific mercy in its feeble form may be found among mankind and other creatures.

According to a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as),

"the Most Gracious"

(Rahman) is All-Encompassing and is solely a Divine Attribute, but

"merciful"

(rahim) is specific. In other words, the former is a specific name but is all-encompassing, namely, it is a Divine Attribute reflecting that His Mercy is All-Encompassing.

But,

"merciful"

is a general name with specific application, namely it may be applied to anyone, but

"merciful"

is general name with specific application, i.e., it is applied to God Almighty and His Creatures.

Likewise, the Noble Prophet (S) is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an as:

"kind and merciful"[6]

(ra'uf al-rahim), but they designate limited and specific mercy.

Qur'an exegetes are not unanimous regarding the issue as to who received the teaching of the Holy Qur'an. Some maintain that Gabriel, angels, the Noble Prophet (S), and all mankind and even jinn received it.

Since the blessed Chapter in question treats of Divine Blessings bestowed upon jinn and mankind, and the question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?"***

is attested thirty one times following an enumeration of Divine Blessings, the last interpretation sounds to be more appropriate, namely God Almighty taught jinn and mankind the Holy Qur'an through His Messenger, the Noble Prophet of Islam (S).

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 3

خَلَقَ الْإِنسَانَ

3. He created man.

Following a treatment of the unique Blessing of teaching the Holy Qur'an in the preceding Verse, the blessed Verse in question says:

"He created man."

It goes without saying that the word "man" (insan) designates mankind rather than Prophet Adam (as), since he rather than the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) will be mentioned in the following Verses, though the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) is a man par excellence.

The All-Encompassing Blessing of speech which will follow serves as another argument substantiating the general application of the word "man." Thus, other interpretations are not seemingly true.

Indeed, creation of man as the most wondrous creature in the world of existence, i.e. the macrocosm included in man, the microcosm, is an unequalled Blessing, since each dimension of his being is a great Blessing.

It is worthy of note that man begins its being as an unworthy semen, narrowly speaking, a microscopic being afloat in that unworthy drop of semen. Nonetheless, the being, thanks to Divine Lordship, proceeds on the path of evolution and development such that he may be promoted to the state of the most exalted and the noblest being in the world of existence.

It is also worthy of note that the name of man follows the Holy Qur'an, since the Holy Qur'an encompasses all the secrets of the world of existence in their codified form and man is the synopsis of these secrets in the form of coming into being and development and each and every man reflects a version of this great and vast world!

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 4

عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ

4. He taught him speech.

The blessed Verse in question makes a reference to one of the most significant Blessings second to the creation of man, saying:

"God Almighty taught him speech."

The Arabic word bayan:

(***"speech"***)

enjoys a wide range of meaning, applied to whatever clarifies something. Thus, it not only encompasses speech but also it connotes script, writing, and different intellectual and logical arguments clarifying complicated and sophisticated issues. The word encompasses all, though the core meaning is speech.[7]

Since men are habitually inclined toward speech, they underestimate it, but the fact is that speech is one of the most sophisticated and the most delicate of human acts.

It may even be said that nothing is as sophisticated and delicate as speech, since sound production systems work together to produce different sounds. Lungs pump down the air and emit the same in time through larynx.

Vocals tracts reverberate and produce totally different sounds to reflect satisfaction, wrath, requesting assistance, love, and hate. Then such sounds are produced with speed and particular delicacy through the tongue, lips, teeth, and the oral cavity. In other words, the monotonous and prolonged sound emitting from the larynx is fashioned in different forms and measures thereby different sounds are produced.

On the other hand, the coinage of words is raised such that owing to intellectual developments, man coins different words to meet his material and spiritual requirements. It is a source of surprise that there exists no limit as to the quantity of vocabulary and the number of languages spoken in the world is so large that it evades determination.

Novel words and languages are formed in time. Some say that the languages of the world run to three thousand, but some even maintain that the number exceeds the same.[8] They were seemingly after enumerating languages, since the number of regional dialects and accents far exceeds the aforesaid numbers as there are many instances in which the inhabitants of two adjacent villages speak two regionally different languages.

Another point is the rules of syntax governing clauses and also expression of arguments and feelings are carried out through intellect and reason as the soul of speech. Thus, speech is peculiar to man.

It is true that many animals produce sounds to communicate but the sounds produced by them is so limited in number and they are rather vague compared to human speech which is of wide application and boundless, since God Almighty has provided man with the required faculty of speech.

Furthermore, with due consideration of the role of speech in the developments of human life and the emergence and developments of civilizations, one may certainly believe that it is solely thanks to this great Blessing that mankind may pass down their knowledge and experience from one generation to the

following one and thereby cause the advancement of knowledge and science and the developments in civilizations, religions, and ethics. Put the case that such great Blessing is withheld, human societies will rapidly move towards regression.

If the word:

"speech"

herein be applied to script and writing and even different kinds of arts, its extraordinary role in the life of mankind is furthered clarified. Now it becomes crystal clear why mention is made of God Almighty teaching man speech following the creation of man treated in the blessed Chapter in question which encompasses a compendium of Divine Blessings.

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 5

الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ

5. The sun and the moon follow their measured out calculation.

The blessed Verse in question treats of the fourth great Divine Blessing bestowed by the God Almighty, the Most Gracious. The blessed Verse is saying that the sun and the moon follow their courses with measured out calculation.

The existence of the sun is one of the greatest Divine Blessings bestowed upon man, since life would be unimaginable in the solar system without the light and heat of the sun. It was mentioned above that any motion on the earth springs from the solar light and heat. Growth of plants and production of provision, precipitation, and blowing of winds are all thanks to this Divine Blessing.

The moon, in its turn, plays a key role in human life. It is the light of his dark nights, its gravity is the sources of ebb and flow in oceans result in life in seas and watering of rivers flowing onto seas. Besides, the fixed course of the twain circulations, that of the moon round the earth and that of the earth round the sun results in the orderly emergence of nights and days, years, months, and seasons.

They make human life order through which man may make use of the same for his commercial, industrial, and agricultural activities. Without such order, human life could never have any order.

It is worthy of note that not only the movement of these celestial bodies are precisely measured out, but also the quantity of their mass and gravity and their distance from the earth and from each other are all well calculated, without which great disruptions would occur in the solar system and consequently in human life.

It is also worthy of note that although the sun is seemingly motionless in the solar system, but it should be kept in mind that it, along with all its planets is moving in the milky way galaxy toward a specific point, the star known as Vega, and such movement follows a certain order and speed.

For further information, one may refer to 36:38—40:

(***"And the sun runs on its fixed course for a term appointed. That is the Decree of the Omnipotent, the Omniscient. And the moon, We have measured for it mansions to traverse till it returns to like the old dried curved date stalk. It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day. They all float, each in an orbit."***).

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 6

وَالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ

6. And the plants and the trees both prostrate themselves to Him.

According to Raghib's Mufradat, the Arabic word najm is applied to "star" and "stemless plant." The word originally denotes "rise," and the designation najm is owing to its "rise."

It is common knowledge that all the food used by mankind originally derives from plants, some of which are directly consumed by man and some are used to feed those animals constituting human dietary ingredients. It is applied to sea animals, since they feed on minute plants growing in millions throughout water under sun light floating in between waves.

Thus the word najm is applied to small, creeping plants like pumpkin and cucumber and the word shajar designates types of plants with stems, stalks, and trunks, like crops and fruit bearing trees.

The Arabic verbal form yasjudan; ("the two prostrate themselves") connotes unconditional submission against the rules of creation in vein with human benefits, a Divinely appointed fixed course which they follow without any alteration.

It also alludes to their monotheistic secrets since each leaf or seed contain wondrous Signs of Divine Greatness and Omniscience;

(***"Each leaf is a book of Divine Omniscience"***).

Some also maintain that the Arabic word najm may connote stars, but the aforesaid exegesis is more consistent with the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse.

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 7-8

وَالسَّمَاء رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ

أَلَا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ

7. And the heaven: He raised it high, and He set up two Balances.
8. In order that you may not transgress Balance.

Following a treatment of Divine Graciousness and the blessings of teaching, speech, calculation of the sun, the moon, and prostration of creatures which implies Divine relation with man and nature, the blessed Verses in question discuss the manner of man's relation with society.

Maintaining the balance refers to moderation as per which immoderation and inflicting loss is unjustifiable. It is worthy of note that the fifth creature upon which Divine Graciousness and Mercy are bestowed is the heaven that enjoys an exalted state.

The Arabic word sama' ("heaven, sky") is cognate with sumuw ("exaltedness, height, elevation from the earth") and the clause:

"He raised it high"

may connote the exaltedness of planets, stars, galaxies, and celestial spheres, such that these creatures are both higher and more exalted than the earth, since heavenly bodies are quantitatively and qualitatively higher than the earth and whatever exists on it.

The point is that man is the synopsis of all earthly and heavenly creatures and nobler and more exalted that most of the existent beings.

"He set upon two Balances"

is that setting up the two Balances constitute the sixth Manifestation and Gracious Emanation. Balance is employed for weighing and assaying something by something else like balance and scale, even if the thing happens to be immaterial, like assaying knowledge by something else.

It also connotes the equality and equilibrium between the constituent elements of the thing, as it is said that the constituents of these two things are in equilibrium. Some maintain that balance is used for weighing and assaying and maintaining perceptible and immaterial equilibrium, since balance is a polysemous word with different implications.

Balance may be applied in all matters like beliefs and ethics and whatever may be assayed in everyday

and natural issues in human society and civilization so that people may not be wronged in transactions and they may not incur loss and damage but the balance be maintained, namely justice be administered in human society. It may entail what exists in equilibrium like limitation of the irascible and concupiscent faculties.

The blessed Verse 8 provides an interesting conclusion of the same adding that the goal of setting up balance in the world of existence is that you may maintain the balance and refrain from transgressing the bounds. You are also a part of this great world and you may never live inconsistently with it.

There is a system and a balance in this world and you have to have the same. Without such balance and order, the world will perish. If you lack order and balance in your lives, you will tread the path to perdition. The truth behind monotheism is that the prevailing principles of it are all the same everywhere.

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 9

وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ

9. And observe the weight with equity and do not make the balance deficient.

Failing to attend to balance, equity, fairness, and justice in respect to the rights of people will lead man to immoderation and injustice. Islam provides people with significant and precise injunctions for the maintenance of justice and balance such that according to traditions, a judge wearing tight shoes is not supposed to issue verdicts lest the tightness of the shoes may affect his judgment and lead him to haste and intemperance thereby he may err as to the administration of justice.

According to another tradition, valuable commerce rests upon truth.

According to a tradition narrated from Imam ‘Ali (as):

"Merchants are wrong-doers and wrong-doers shall abide in Hellfire, unless his transactions be based on truth."[9]

Imam ‘Ali (as) ordered that adulterated coins be cast into wells so that they may not be used for transactions.[10]

He walked in the market of Kufa and at times stopped in the middle of the market saying:

"O merchants! Ask God Almighty for good. Find Divine Blessing in being lenient toward people. Refrain from telling lies in transactions. Abstain from injustice. Be not involved in usury. The said tradition is attested in Kafi, Man la Yahdhuruhu al-Faqih, Majalis, and Tahdhib."

It is worthy of note that the blessed Verse emphasizes maintaining balance and justice saying:

"Observe the weight with equity and do not make the balance deficient."

The word:

"balance"

is attested thrice in these blessed Verses, though it was possible to use pronouns in the second and third instances. It reflects that the word balance (mizan) is employed in three different senses and using pronouns may not do justice in conveying the meanings and the contextual meaning of the Verses also bear witness to the same, since the first instance implies the balance, criterion, and laws set up by God Almighty throughout the world of existence.

The second instance treats of abstention of human beings from disobedience in all the matters concerning individual and social lives which are naturally more limited. The third instance emphasizes the issue of weighing in the narrower sense of the word saying that one may not make the balance deficient in weighing things and the last instance is more restricted in scope.

Thus, there is an interesting consistency in the Verses in the hierarchy of balance from larger circles toward smaller ones. The significance of balance in human life in any of the aforesaid senses is such that taking out the balance in the narrowest sense will entail chaos, problems, and disagreement. The broader the sense, the more disorder will prevail.

Based on the above, it is clarified that the reason behind the interpretation of balance as the presence of Imam (as) is that the presence of the Infallible Imam (as) serves as a criterion for assaying truth and falsehood which may lead to perception of truth and finding guidance. Interpretation of balance to the Holy Qur'an is in this light.

It is, however, worthy of note that all these blessed Verses treat of Divine Blessings reflecting that the existence of balance in the entirety of the world of existence, human society, social relations, commerce, and transactions are all Divine Bounties.

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 10-11

وَالْأَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنَامِ

فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَالنَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْأَكْمَامِ

10. And He created the earth for mankind.
11. Therein are fruits and magnificent date-palms.

The blessed Verses in question descend from the heaven onto the earth, saying:

"God Almighty created the earth for the life of mankind.”

The Arabic word anam is interpreted differently by Qur’an exegetes as mankind, jinn and men, and any animate being. It is worthy of note that the contextual meaning indicates that jinn and men are being herein intended.

The earth which is mentioned herein as a remarkable Divine Blessing is mentioned in other Qur'anic Verses as "cradle" serves as a secure and serene abode whose significance may not be normally perceived by most of us, but an earthquake disturbs everything and volcanic eruption may bury a city beneath magma, fire, and smoke.

Such phenomena indicate that the serene earth is such a great Blessing, particularly if we reflect upon what scientists say concerning the velocity of the earth's rotation on its axis and its circling around the sun, the significance of such serenity despite the staggering velocity, it is further clarified that it entails different types of motion.

The employment of the past verbal forms wadha‘a ("set up") and rafa‘a ("raised") regarding the earth and the heaven both embodies a delicate expression in terms of juxtaposition or contrast and a meaningful allusion to the submission of the earth and its resources against mankind.

As it is reflected in the Holy Qur’an[11]:

"He it is Who had made the earth obedient to you. Therefore walk in its path and eat of His provision. And to Him shall be the Resurrection."

The blessed Verse 11 treats of the tenth Blessings, namely the provisions, saying that there are fruits and magnificent date palms. The Arabic word fakiha denotes any kind of fruit and some interpret it as any kind of fruit but dates which is unjustifiable. Date palms are mentioned separately, but the repetition may reflect the significance of dates and date palms.

The word akmam is the plural form of kum designating the sheath covering fruits. Kumma denotes sleeve covering arm and hand and kum is the night cap covering the head. The fruit of palm trees is initially covered by a sheath. Then, the fruit splits the sheath. The depiction used herein may refer to its astounding beauty or the benefits concealed in the sheath. It contains juice and essence which are both nutritive and medicinal.

Besides, like a womb, the sheath fosters the fruit for a while and preserves it from blights. The sheath will be removed when the fruit may be exposed to sunshine and air. Above all, the peculiar condition of dates is that it is initially in the sheath and then it splits and forms clusters making it facile to be picked. Were tall date palms like other fruit bearing trees like apple, it would be so hard to harvest the produce.

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 12

وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ

12. And also corns, with leaves and stalks for fodder and sweet-scented plants.

Other earthly benefits include crops, like wheat, barley, millet, and lintel growing from the earth on which man feeds. The Arabic word ‘asf denotes the stalk and leaf of grain preserving it until it grows fully.

After harvesting and flailing, they will be used as fodder. Another benefit of the earth is growing sweet scented plants, but the Arabic word rayhan may be applied to all flowers and sweet scented plants by smelling which man may derive pleasure.

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 13

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

13. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Reiteration of issues constitutes significant requirements for creating culture.

It is used at times for reminding different Blessings, like the blessed Verse in question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both deny?"

Repetition may also be used to warn sinners, like

"Woe unto the liars at that time."

It is worthy of note that following an enumeration of different material and immaterial Blessings, the blessed Verse in question thus addresses jinn and men:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both deny?"

Such Blessings are most precious, Blessings encompassing all your lives, each of which serves as a telling token of Divine Omnipotence, Graciousness, and Love. How may one deny them? The rhetorical question is employed herein to bid the addressee to make affirmations as to Divine Blessings bestowed upon jinn and men.

Thus, according to the tradition narrated in the beginning of the exegesis of the Chapter bids us to reply by saying:

"We do not deny any of your Blessings."

Although the preceding blessed Verses solely make mention of mankind without making the slightest reference to jinn, but the following blessed Verses reflect that the antecedent of the dual pronoun kuma

(***"both of you"***)

are jinn and men.

It is worthy of note that by mentioning such rhetorical question, God Almighty makes jinn and men encounter the reality to reflect upon such issues and without recourse to any other injunction ask themselves:

"Could any of these Divine Blessings be denied?"

If the answer is negative, why do they not recognize their Lord? Why do they not make use of showing gratitude toward their Lord as a means of recognizing His Lordship? Why do they not prostrate themselves at His Divine Threshold?

The phrase:

"which of"

(bi-ayya, lit. "to which") indicates that each of these Blessings is a telling token of His Lordship, Graciousness, and Beneficence, let alone all His Blessings.

The least reflection upon the aforementioned twelve Blessings (the Holy Qur'an, creation of man, teaching speech, well measured calculation of time, creation of plants and all kinds of trees, creation of the heaven, predominance of rules, creation of the earth with its characteristics, creation of kinds of fruit, creation of date palm, creation of crops, creation of flowers and sweet scented plants) along with the details, delicacies, and secrets concealed in each of them will suffice to make man show his gratitude toward God Almighty and cause him to search for obtaining knowledge as to the source of all these Blessings.

It is for the same reason that God Almighty asks the rhetorical question following an enumeration of His Blessings. The rhetorical question will be asked thirty one times in the following blessed Verses after enumerating further Blessings.

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 14-16

خَلَقَ الْإِنسَانَ مِن صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ

وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِن مَّارِجٍ مِّن نَّارٍ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

14. He created man from dry clay like the clay of pottery.
15. And the jinn: He created from smokeless flames of fire.
16. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?***

The Arabic word salsal denotes "dry clay, argillaceous earth."

Fakhkhar designates

"pottery clay."

Marij indicates

"flame."

Following an enumeration of His Blessings, including making mention of the creation of man in passing, the blessed Verses in question (14-16) make an account of the creation of jinn and man.

It serves as a telling token of His Omnipotence and also provides everyone with lessons, saying:

"He created man from dry clay like clay of pottery."

The word salsal denotes dry, rattling clay. The word fakhkhar is applied to any kind of pottery which rattles upon being touched.

Different Qur'anic Verses and expressions regarding the source of human creation clearly reflect that man used to be earth in the beginning:

(***"O mankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, they indeed We have created you from dust, then from semen, then from a clot that We may make it clear to you. And We cause whom We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed term, then We bring you out as infants, then that you may reach your age of full strength. And among you there is he who dies and among you there is he who is brought back to the miserable old age, so that he knows nothing after having known. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down water on it, it is stirred and it swells and puts forth every beauteous kind of growth,"***[12])

Then it is mingled with water and turns into clay:

(***"He it is Who created you from clay and then decreed a term and there is with Him another***

appointed term yet you doubt,"[13]***;***

(***"And when your Lord said unto angels: 'I am going to create man from dried rattling clay of foul smelling mud,"***[14])

Then it became sticky

(***"Then ask them: 'Are they stronger as creation or those whom We created?' Indeed, We created them of a sticky clay,"***[15]***.***

Later on it dried up and became rattling pottery clay as mentioned in the blessed Verse in question. How long did these stages take? How long did man stop at each of these stages? What were the factors leading to these transitional states? Our knowledge fails to uncover such secrets as the knowledge thereof rests with God Almighty alone.

What is certain is that such expressions serve as telling tokens of a reality which is significantly linked to educational issues of mankind – the primeval mass forming human body was the most unworthy and the lowliest of all matters to be found on the earth, but God Almighty created such worthy creature out of such unworthy matter such that man became the noblest of His creatures.

It is also worthy of note that the true value of human being is the Divine Spirit as it is reflected in Qur'anic Verses:

(***"Therefore, when I have fashioned him completely and breathed into him the soul which I created for him, then fall down prostrating yourselves unto him,"***[16]***.***

Thus, man may find his path towards perfection through the recognition of this truth such that he may know which way he is supposed to tread to find his true value in the world of existence.

The blessed Verse 15 treats of the creation of jinn, saying:

"And the jinn: He created from smokeless flames of fire."

The Arabic word marij is cognate with maraj ("mingling, mixture") which herein connotes different flames of fire, since blazing fire appears in different colors, red, yellow, blue, and white. It is not known either how jinn were created from such colorful flames of fire.

Likewise, other characteristics of jinn are known to us by the True Dawn, namely the Glorious Qur'an, Divine Revelation. Our limited knowledge may never allow us to deny nor to ignore such truths, as they are proven through Divine Revelation, though they defy our knowledge. It is worthy of note that most of the creatures known to us were created out of water, earth, wind, and fire.

The source of human creation was water and earth but that of jinn is wind and fire, even if, like ancients, we regard them simple and element or like modern scientists who regard them to be composite, made

up from different constituent elements. Such duality in the origins of creation causes many differences between the twain.

The blessed Verse 16 follows the enumeration of the Blessings one of which was the creation of man. It reiterates the rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [*jinn and men*] *deny?"*

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 17-18

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

17. The Lord of the two easts and the Lord of the two wests.
18. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [*jinn and men*] *deny?*

The blessed Verse 17 treats of another Divine Blessing saying that God Almighty is the Lord of two easts and two wests. It is true that each and every day in a year's time, the sun rises from a point and sets in another, thus the number of easts and wests run to the number of the days in a year, but taking into account the maximum northern and southern axes of the sun, we notice that other easts and wests fall between the twain.

Such order is the origin of the emergence of the four seasons of the year engendering abundance and it actually emphasizes and completes the contents of the foregoing blessed Verses treating of the well measured calculation of the course of the sun and the moon and the existence of the balance in the creation of the heavens.

Generally speaking, the blessed Verse reflects the precise order of creation, motions of the sun and the moon and the Blessings thereby bestowed upon man.

Some Qur'anic exegetes maintain that the two easts and the two wests herein connote the rising and setting of the sun and the moon, but the first interpretation is seemingly more appropriate, particularly owing to the fact that a number of Islamic traditions make references to the same and instance of which is a tradition narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) as per the exegesis of the blessed Verse in question, he says that the easts of the beginning of winter and summer are discrete.

Do you not see that the sun approximates and distances. It is a reference to the rising of the sun in the heaven in summer and the setting of the sun in winter.[17]

The foregoing remarks clarify the reason behind Oaths like:

"Therefore, I swear by the Lord of all the points of sunrise and sunset in the east and the west that certainly We are All-Mighty,"[18]*).*

The reason is that reference is made to all the easts and wests of the sun during a year, whereas the blessed Verse in question makes a reference to the solar ascending and descending arches.

Again, the following Verse thus addresses jinn and men asking them:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [*jinn and men*] ***deny?"***

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 19-21

مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ

بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَّا يَبْغِيَانِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

19. He let loose the two salty and sweet seas meeting together.
20. Between them is a barrier so that none of them can transgress.
21. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [*jinn and men*] ***deny?***

The Arabic verbal form maraja designates:

"let loose"

and the Arabic noun barzakh denotes "a barrier between two things." Resuming the account of Divine Blessings mention is made of seas, but not all seas. The particular quality of certain seas is an astonishing phenomenon serving as a token of Divine Absolute Omnipotence. It also serves as a means of producing certain things used by men.

Thus, the blessed Verses are saying that He juxtaposed two different seas while they meet; however, there is a barrier between the twain such that one may not agitate and prevail over the other.

As it is reflected elsewhere in the Glorious Qur’an, the twain seas are the salty and the sweet seas:

"And it is He Who let loose the two seas: one palatable and sweet and the other salty and bitter and He set a barrier and a complete partition between them"[19].

Qur'anic exegetes disagree as to the location of the two sweet and salty seas and the fact that one does not prevail the other and the nature of the barrier separating the twain.

However, mention was already made of the point in the exegesis of Chapter 25 saying that great sweet rivers flowing into seas and oceans usually form a sea of sweet water beside the coast thus repelling the brine and it would be of interest to know that sweet and salty water, owing to the difference in the degrees of thickness, do not intermingle.

A bird's eye view of discrete salty and sweet waters clearly shows the partition between the twain. When the margins of the twain intermingle, fresh sweet water substitutes the mingled waters, such that the partition between the twain is visible at all times. It is interesting that at the time of flow, the level of oceans is raised, such that sweet water is repelled without being intermingled with the brine.

The blessed Verse 21 is again addressed to God's servants inquiring:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both** [**jinn and men**] **deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 22-23

يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

22. Out of both seas come out pearl and coral.
23. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both** [**jinn and men**] **deny?

Resuming the account of Divine Blessings, the blessed Verse 22 is saying that pearl and coral come out of the twain seas. It is worthy of note that interesting adornments are made of pearl and coral. They are also used in medical treatments and they constitute commodities and merchandise as well. Many benefits are accrued out of them. Thus, they are being referred to as two Blessings.

Pearls are transparent and precious things fostered in mothers of pearl in the depth of the seas. The larger they are, the more precious they become. They are also used in many medical treatments. Former physicians made different potions out of them for strengthening the heart, the nervous system and warding off different kinds of breathing ailments, fear, kidney and eye complications, bad breath, kidney and bladder stones, and jaundice.[20]

Coral is herein interpreted by some exegetes as small pearl, but such interpretation is far from being true. It is an animate being similar to a twig growing in the depth of seas. It was regarded by scientists for some time to be a kind of plant, but later on it became evident that it belongs to the animal world. It

sticks to the bottom of the sea and at times covers a vast area to increase in time and form coral islands.

The best kind of coral is red in color and the redder, the more precious it is. Besides serving as adornment, it is applied in medicine and many benefits have been enumerated for the same. Instances of its medical applications include potions made from it which are sued for strengthening the heart, removal of viper's venom, strengthening of the nervous system, treatment of diarrhea and womb bleeding. It is also said that it is useful for treatment of epilepsy.

The following Verse further emphasizes on Divine Blessings saying:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

A tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse:

"He let loose the two salty and sweet seas meeting together,"

according to which:

*"'Ali and Fatima (as) are two deep seas, none of the twain transgresses the other out of the twain seas pearl and coral, namely Hasan and Husayn (as) came out."*21

The same point is also attested in Tafsir al-Manthur22. It may be attested in most of Shi'i exegetic works, e.g. Tabarsi's Majma' al-Bayan and also in Tafsir Burhan, Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, Tafsir Safi, and also in some of Sunni exegetic works with slight variations.

However, it is known that the Glorious Qur'an has different layers thereby one single Verse may have several or tens of meanings. The content of the aforesaid tradition derives from Qur'anic layers and is not inconsistent with the literal meaning of the same.

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 24-25

وَلَهُ الْجَوَارِ الْمُنشَآتُ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

24. And His are the ships built, like mountains.
25. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

In the treatment of other Blessings, the Holy Qur'an did not make use of

"His" (lahu),

but regarding ships, Divine Revelation says:

"His are built ships"

intending to say that even the product built by you is also His, since the idea, plan, and the physical strength required for building and making things all spring from Him. Thus, the Holy Qur'an is saying that ships floating in seas with sails resembling mountains are all manifestations of Divine Graciousness. Mujahid is quoted as saying that the Arabic word munsha'at is applied to sailing ships.

The point is that when you see the Signs of Divine Graciousness, Omnipotence, and Greatness, note that Divine Favors include ships made up of pieces of wood upon which you embark and travel in such vast seas. Then, how do you deny your Lord's Bounties and Blessings. Who, other than God Almighty, the Omnipotent, has given you such might and power?

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 26-28

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ

وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

26. Whatsoever is on the earth is transient.
27. And only the Essence of your Lord full of Majesty and Honor shall remain forever.
28. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

The preceding blessed Verses treated of Divine Blessings and the blessed Verse 26 is saying that the time of benefitting from these Blessings is brief. Seize the opportunity since you are all transient. The contextual meaning of the blessed Verse designates that all things are transient and trifling in their essence, but what remains is Divine Essence which is not subject to transience.

Now, a question arises here: how the question of transience may be regarded as a Divine Blessing? Such transience may not lead to absolute effacement and annihilation, but it is a window to the world of everlastingness, a tunnel or path leading to the abode of everlastingness. The world with all its bounties is a prison to believers and a way out of this world is a way out of the dark and small prison.

The blessed Verse 27 is saying that only the Honorable and Great Essence of you Lord shall remain. The Arabic word wajh literally denotes "face, countenance" perceived in the first encounter with someone, but employed regarding God Almighty, it connotes His Pure Essence.

The blessed Verse 28 addresses creatures once more asking:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 29-30

يَسْأَلُهُ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

29. Whosoever is in the heavens and on earth begs Him to meet his demands. Every day He is in some affair.
30. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Invocation may be expressed through verbal or non-verbal language. Man is in need of God Almighty at all times, whether he invokes him to meet his demands or he fails to do likewise.

The point is that God Almighty is in the process of creation at all times and each and every day He plans something anew and his meeting the demands of the needy and those who invoke him to meet their needs is likewise. One day He bestows might upon some people and the other day he ruins them owing to their disobedience and committing sins.

One day He bestows health and youth and the other day He inflicts weakness upon certain people. One day He removes grieves and sorrows from hearts and the another day He causes certain people to feel grief and sorrow.

In short, He creates something anew according to His Wisdom and the best order. Attending to this truth clarifies our constant need for His Pre Essence on the one hand and removes the veils of disappointment, desperation, neglect, and vanity from hearts on the other.

"Every day, He is in some affair."

It is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) that in one of his sermons he said:

"Praise and eulogy belong to God Almighty Who shall never die, nor shall end the wonders of His creation, since He is in some affair each and every day creating something new from nothing."[23]

According to a tradition narrated from the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse in question, God Almighty's affair include absolving people of their sins, removing their pains and sorrows, causing certain people to have a more exalted state, and denigrating some others.[24]

It is also worthy of note that the Arabic word yawm employed herein is the opposite of "night," since its semantic range encompasses a long period of time and also hours and seconds, connoting that God Almighty is in some affair at any time. The blessed Verse 30, following an account of the constant Blessings and meeting the demands of all creatures including those of the heavens and the earth asks the rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 31-32

سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيُّهَا الثَّقَلَانِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

31. We shall attend to your records, O you two classes [jinn and men]!
32. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

The Arabic verbal form sanafrughu does not here in connote bringing to an end and completing something, but it designates giving special attention and dealing completely with some significant affair. The blessed Verse 31 is saying that attention shall be paid to the records of all Blessings.

All the preceding blessed Verses so far treat of different material and immaterial Blessings, but the blessed Verse 31 is saying that We shall shortly attend to your records. O jinn and men! God Almighty shall precisely attend to the records of all the deeds, words, and intentions of the jinn and men and Rewards and Chastisements proportionate to their words, deeds, and intentions shall be apportioned to them.

It is also worthy of note that according to the author of Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan, since jinn and men are superior to other creatures and possess intellect, free choice, and distinction, they are being referred to as thaqalan.

The blessed Verse 32 reiterates the rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

1. Wasa'il, vol. 4, p. 451.
2. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn; Tafsir Safi; Tafsir Burhan.
3. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 187.
4. 17:82
5. 25:60
6. 9:128

7. According to a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse

"He taught him speech,"

he said:

"Bayan is applied to the Greatest Divine Name (ism a'Ûam) through which everything may be comprehended."

(Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan, under the blessed Verse in question).

8. Farid Wajdi's Encyclopedia, vol. 8, p. 368, s.v. Lugha.
9. Furu' Kafi, vol. 5, p. 150.
10. Kafi, vol. 5, p. 160.
11. 67:15
12. 22:5
13. 6:2
14. 15:28
15. 37:11
16. 15:29
17. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 190.
18. 70:40
19. 25:53
20. Tuhfa Hakim Mu'min; Lughat-nama-yi DihkHuda; etc.
21. Tafsir Qumi, vol. 2, p. 344.
22. vol. 6, p. 42
23. Usul Kafi; Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, Tafsir Burhan, Majma' al-Bayan, under the blessed Verse in question.
24. Majma' al-Bayan, under the blessed Verse in question; Ruh al-Ma'ani; Bukhari's Sahih.

Surah al-Rahman, Verses 33 - 55

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 33-34

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَن تَنفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانفُذُوا لَا تَنفُذُونَ إِلاّ بِسُلْطَانٍ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

33. O assembly of jinn and men! If you have power to pass beyond 1 ***the zones of the heavens and the earth, then pass beyond [them]. But you shall never be able to pass them, except with extraordinary power.***
34. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

The Arabic word ma‘shar is cognate with ‘ashr ("ten") and ‘ashira ("relatives"). The word is attested thrice in the Holy Qur’an in all the instances of which jinn precedes men.

The reason lying behind such precedence may be the points that jinn exceed men in terms of quantity, jinn were created before men;

(***"And We created jinn before*** [***men***]***"***),

and jinn are more prepared to soar in the heavens. Nevertheless, men precede jinn in some other instances. The Arabic word sultan denotes material strength and might leading some to conquer others. It is also applied to academic authority and solid arguments leading to academic and intellectual authority.

It is worthy of note that the blessed Verse in question may also allude to the world, astronautics, transcending the atmosphere of the earth, and penetration into the heavens, since the depth of the earth, the farthest points in space, and celestial bodies may be conquered by jinn. The clause in astata‘tum in lieu of law astata‘tum connotes contingence.

The clause illa bi-sulttan-in alludes to the fact that it is possible to penetrate into the heavens and the earth, particularly to the effect that in the Glorious Qur’an, the Arabic word sultan connotes academic authority.

Taking into account, the contextual meanings of the preceding and the following blessed Verses, it may also make a reference to Resurrection and the impossibility of evading Divine Tribunal.

Thus, the blessed Verse in question is saying:

"O jinn and men! If you truly intend to evade Divine Recompense and Chastisement, make an attempt to transcend the boundaries of the heavens and the earth and thereby leave the bounds of His Omnipotence. However, you may never embark upon the same, unless through Divine Might and such Might is not at your disposal. You may never evade the Tribunal of Divine Justice. Wherever you go, you shall be Divine Realm. Wherever you stand, it shall be His Sovereignty.”

Such weak creatures may never transcend the boundaries of Divine Sovereignty.

Likewise, Imam ‘Ali (as) in the exhilarating invocation of Kumayl says:

"No one may evade Your Omnipotence and Sovereignty."

The blessed Verse 34 is again asking the rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?"***

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 35-36

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شُوَاظٌ مِّن نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنتَصِرَانِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاء رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

35. There shall be sent against you both, smokeless flames of fire and molten brass, and you shall not be able to defend yourselves.
36. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?***

To further emphasize the inability of jinn and men to evade Divine Justice, the blessed Verse 35 is saying:

"There shall be sent against you both, smokeless flames of fire and molten brass, and you shall not be able to defend yourselves."

Then, they may not seek succor from anyone, since angels shall surround you on the one hand and burning flames of fire and dark and suffocating smoke surrounds the Plain of Judgment on the other. There shall remain no way out. The Arabic word shuwad designates great and awe-inspiring flames of fire.

The Arabic word nuhas denotes the smoky and red flames of fire that turn copper in color. It is a source of surprise that Divine Tribunal is surrounded by Divine agents, suffocating smoke, and blazing fire and there shall remain no way but to attend the Tribunal and submit to the Verdict.

The blessed Verse 36 further asks:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?"***

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 37-38

فَإِذَا انشَقَّتِ السَّمَاء فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً كَالدِّهَانِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاء رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

37. Then when the heaven is rent asunder, and it becomes red like molten oil [***you shall not bear the horrible incidents***].

38. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Resuming the account of the preceding blessed Verses regarding some of the incidents that shall occur on the Day of Resurrection, the blessed Verse 37 treat of further depictions of the scenes of Resurrection and the manner of attending to records and Divine Recompense.

Thus the blessed Verse 37 is saying that when the heaven is rent asunder and turns rosy like molten oil, horrible incidents shall occur such that no one may bear them. All the blessed Qur'anic Verses concerning Resurrection clearly reflect that the present order of the world shall be disturbed on that Day and very horrible incidents shall occur throughout the world.

Stars, planets, the earth shall undergo alterations and incidents shall occur which may not be imagined by us. Instances of such incidents include tearing asunder of celestial bodies turning rosy like molten oil. The word warda designates flower and most of flowers are red in color. The word dihan is employed in the sense of molten oil which is often different in color.

The blessed Verse 38 reiterates the rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 39-40

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَاَ يُسْأَلُ عَن ذَنبِهِ إِنسٌ وَلَاَ جَانٌّ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاَءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

39. Therefore, on that Day no question shall be asked of men or jinn as to their sins.
40. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Following an account of the formative occurrences of Resurrection, the blessed Verse 39 treats of the state of sinners on that Day saying that jinn and men shall not be questioned concerning their sins, since everything shall be evident on the Day of Emergence (yawm al-buruz) and faces reflect everything.

It may be falsely imagined that the blessed Verse in question is inconsistent with those emphasizing the questioning of servants on the Day of Resurrection, e.g.

*"But Stop them, indeed they are to be questioned,"*2

and

*"Therefore, by your Lord, We shall certainly question all of them for all they used to do,"*3*;*

however, the point is that the Day of Resurrection shall be a very long Day and man has to pass different paths and stations and spend some time at each place. According to a number of traditions, such stopping places shall be fifty in number. Questions shall not be asked at some of these places, since faces reveal inward secrets.

At some of these places, mouths shall be sealed and bodily organs bear witness to deeds and words;

(*"This Day We shall seal up their mouths and their hands shall speak unto Us and their legs shall bear witness to what they used to earn,"*4)*.*

There are still other places where questions shall be precisely asked5.

Further, men shall come up pleading:

(*"The Day when everyone shall come up pleading for himself and everyone shall be paid in full for what he did and they shall not be dealt with unfairly,"*)6.

In short, each and every scene has its own conditions and each scene shall be more horrible than another.

The blessed Verse 40 asks the rhetorical question once more:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [*jinn and men*] *deny?"*

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 41-42

يُعْرَفُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ بِسِيمَاهُمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالنَّوَاصِي وَالْأَقْدَامِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

41. The sinners shall be known by their marks and they will be seized by their forelocks and their feet [*and shall be cast into Hell*].
42. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [*jinn and men*] *deny?*

Those who committed all kinds of sins and disobeyed Divine Command by all their beings from their hair to their feet shall be seized on the Day of Resurrection by their hair and feet to be cast into Hellfire.

The Arabic word sima is employed in the sense of:

"mark."

The Arabic word nawasi is the plural form of nasiya designating:

"forelock."

On that Day, questions shall not be asked since sinners shall be recognized by their marks and faces. Some shall have smiling and brilliant faces which reflect their faith and righteous good deeds and some other shall have dark, ugly, and sullen faces, reflecting their faithlessness and evil deeds.

The blessed Verse further adds that then they shall be seized by their forelocks and their feet and they shall be cast into Hell. The scene is quite agonizing and awe-inspiring.

The blessed Verse 42 is a warning against Resurrection and a Favor bestowed upon everyone:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 43-45

هَذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ

يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ آنٍ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

43. This is the Hell which the sinners denied.
44. They shall move between Hellfire and the fierce boiling water.
45. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Denial of Paradise, Hell, and Resurrection lead man to join the people of Hell.

The antecedent of the Arabic demonstrative pronoun hadhihi:

(***"this"***)

in the blessed Verse 43 is the preceding blessed Verse. It is as if angels or guards of Hell say unto sinners that this is Hell against which Prophets warned you but you denied and belied it out of arrogance, vanity, enmity, and ignorance. The blessed Verse 44 further depicts Hell and its excruciating torments saying that sinners move between Hell and boiling water.

The Arabic word hamim denotes:

"boiling water"

and the Arabic word an employed herein designates the utmost degree of heat. Thus, they burn and thirst and ask for water on the one hand and boiling water will given unto them or boiling water will be splashed upon them on the other and it will be an excruciating chastisement. The blessed Verse 45 is a serious and awakening warning and a Divine Favor:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [*jinn and men*] *deny?"*

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 46-47

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتَانِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

46. But for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there shall be two Gardens.
47. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Fearing standing before God Almighty prevents man from committing sins and will lead to Paradise, as it is reflected elsewhere in the Glorious Qur'an[7]:

"But as for him who feared standing before his Lord and restrained himself from concupiscent desires, indeed, Paradise shall be his abode."[8]

The blessed Verse 46 is also saying that for he who fears standing before his Lord, there shall be two Gardens in Paradise. Fearing standing before Lord means that one who knows God Almighty through His Greatness, Glory, and Lordship, such knowledge causes fear in him and there shall be two Gardens in Paradise for him.

It may also mean the fear of Resurrection and its stations and standing before His Threshold for records of deeds and Divine Supervision and Constant Care for all mankind. It is worthy of note that fear is supposed to spring from knowing Divine Lordship.

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"He who believes that God sees him and hears whatever he says, such belief restrains him from committing evil deeds. Such person fears standing before God Almighty and restrains himself from concupiscent desires."[9]

It is narrated that the Noble Prophet (S) said unto Imam 'Ali (as):

"Several things lead to deliverance one of which is fear of God inwardly and outwardly."[10]

Fear of standing before God Almighty in this world shall lead to security from all fears in the Hereafter, as it is reflected in other Qur’anic Verses, e.g.

*"There is no doubt that indeed believers who love Allah no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve,"*11*.*

In short, fear of God Almighty leads to submission to the Truth and doing righteous good deeds. Thus, there is no other condition besides fear of God Almighty. For one who fears standing before his Lord, there shall be two Gardens in Paradise.

The blessed Verse 47 repeats the rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?"***

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 48-51

ذَوَاتَا أَفْنَانٍ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَجْرِيَانِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

48. [***Gardens with trees***] ***with spreading and fresh branches*** [***with diverse Blessings***]***.***
49. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?***
50. In those two Gardens shall two springs be flowing.
51. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?***

These blessed Verses depict the two Gardens in Paradise saying that they have different Blessings and trees with fresh branches. The Arabic word dhawata is dual and designates "having, owing."

The Arabic word afnan is the plural of fanan denoting:

"fresh branch"

and also "kind, type." The word may connote both senses in the blessed Verse 48, namely it may refer to fresh branches of trees in Paradise which are unlike trees in this world which may have old, dead, or

fresh branches and it may also make a reference to the diversity of Blessings in Paradise.

Both applications are accurate, though the trees in Paradise might be different in that one single tree might have different branches with different kinds of fruit.

The blessed Verse 49 reiterates the rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Since a verdant garden is supposed to have trees and flowing springs, the blessed Verse 50 is saying that:

"In those two Gardens two springs shall be flowing."

Addressing jinn and men, the blessed Verse 51 repeats the question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 52-53

فِيهِمَا مِن كُلِّ فَاكِهَةٍ زَوْجَانِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاء رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

52. In those two Gardens shall be two kinds of each and every fruit.
53. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

There shall be abundance, diversity, and availability in Paradise. Regarding the fruits of the twain Gardens in Paradise, the blessed Verse 52 is saying that two kinds shall be found there of each and every fruit, a kind available in this world and another which was not seen in the mundane world.

The rhetorical question is reiterated in the blessed Verse 53:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 54-55

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَى فُرُشٍ بَطَائِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ وَجَنَى الْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

54. Reclining upon the couches lined with silk, brocade, and the fruits of the two Gardens will be near at hand.
55. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Three characteristics of the twain Gardens in Paradise were enumerated in the preceding blessed Verses. The blessed Verse 54 treats of the fourth characteristic, saying that people of Paradise recline upon couches lined with brocade. One usually reclines upon something when he happens to be in peace and utmost security.

The depiction reflects perfect serenity of the souls of the people of Paradise. The Arabic plural noun furush denotes carpets and couches. Bata'in designates lining and istabraq is applied to thick brocade.

It would be interest to see that the most precious fabric in this world will be used as the lining of couches in Paradise, connoting that the covers shall be indescribable in terms of delicacy, beauty, and appeal, since lining is not visible and the lowliest kinds of fabric are used for lining in this world.

However, the most precious item in this world shall be the most insignificant in Paradise. Thus, what shall the precious items be in Paradise? Divine Blessings in the Hereafter shall be describable neither in our terms and nor by our imagination.

We may solely have a vague idea about such otherworldly Blessings. The fifth characteristic of the Blessings of these Gardens in Paradise is that the ripe fruits shall be near at hand there. It shall be unlike the ripe fruits for whose picking one has to take troubles.

The Arabic word jana designates "ripe fruit" and the word dan denotes:

"near."

The blessed Verse 55 is again addressed to all jinn and men:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

1. The Arabic verbal form tanfudhu derives from n-f-dh, literally denoting "tearing asunder and pass through something."
2. 37:24
3. 15:92-93
4. 36:65
5. 37:24; 15:92-93
6. 16:111
7. 80:40-41
8. 80:40-41
9. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, under the blessed Verse in question.
10. Tafsir Kanz al-Daqa'iq, under the blessed Verse in question.

11. 10:62

Surah al-Rahman, Verses 56 - 78

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 56-57

فِيهِنَّ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

56. In both Gardens of Paradise shall be chaste females restraining their glances, desiring none except their husbands with whom no man or jinni has had intercourse.
57. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Five Divine Blessings of the twain Gardens in Paradise were enumerated in the preceding blessed Verses and the blessed Verse 56 treats of the six Blessing – chaste spouses in Paradise. The blessed Verse is saying that there shall be women in those palaces in Paradise who restraining their glances solely look at their husbands and love no one but them and no jinni or man has ever touched them. Thus, they shall be virgin and undefiled in any respect.

It is narrated on the authority of Abudhar Ghaffari that the woman in Paradise shall say unto her husband:

"By the Glory of my Lord! I find nothing better than you in Paradise. Praise be to God Almighty Who married me unto you."[1]

The Arabic word tarf denotes "eyelid" and since eyelids move while glancing, it figuratively connotes "glance." Thus, the expression qasirat al-tarf denotes "[females] restraining [their] glances" connoting that they love their husbands.

It is one of the best merits of a woman to solely think of her husband and only love him. The Arabic verbal form yatmithhunna ("they menstruate") deriving from t-m-th ("menstruate, deflorate") ad hoc connotes that females in Paradise shall be virgin.

The blessed Verse 57, addressed to jinn and men, poses the question anew:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 58-59

كَأَنَّهُنَّ الْيَاقُوتُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

58. They are like rubies and coral.
59. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?***

The blessed Verse 58 further depicts spouses in Paradise saying that they are like rubies in terms of rosiness and purity and like coral in terms of whiteness and beauty. When the colors of rubies and coral, namely red and white, intermingle, a very beauteous color will be produced.

Ruby is a mineral which is usually red in color. Coral is a marine animal like branches and twigs of trees whose colors include white and red, but the white kind is seemingly intended herein.

The blessed Verse 59 again asks the question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?"***

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 60-61

هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلاّ الْإِحْسَانُ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

60. Is there any reward for good other than good?
61. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [***jinn and men***] ***deny?***

By the word good (ihsan) mentioned herein, doing righteous good deeds and doing good to others are intended.[2]

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"The blessed Verse

'Is there any reward for good other than good'

applies to believers and disbelievers, since whoever does good to another, the latter is supposed to return the good done to him."[3]

Imam 'Ali narrates from the Messenger of Allah (S) that God Almighty said:

"Is the reward of the one to whom I have bestowed Favor is other than Paradise?"[4]

In short the blessed Verse in question is saying that those who have done righteous good deeds in this world shall be granted Divine Rewards.

The blessed Verse 61 repeats the question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 62-63

وَمِن دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَانِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاء رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

62. And besides these two Gardens, there are two other Gardens.
63. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Resuming the discussion the two Gardens in Paradise in store for the God fearing and the enumeration of Divine Blessings, the blessed Verse 62 makes mention of two Gardens in Paradise located on a lower level reserved naturally for those who are on a lower level of belief in and fearing God Almighty.

In other words, there is a hierarchy in terms of belief in God Almighty and doing righteous good deeds. Thus, the blessed Verse in question is saying that two other Gardens are to be found on a level lower than that of the aforementioned Gardens. There are two interpretations for the blessed Verse one of which was already mentioned.

According to the other interpretation, the phrase:

"besides these two"

(min dunihima) connotes that there are two other Gardens for the same believers who may enjoy themselves in those two Gardens as well, since man seeks diversity by nature and is delighted by the same. Nonetheless, taking into account the contextual meaning and the traditions narrated regarding the interpretation of the blessed Verse in question, the former interpretation is seemingly more consistent.

Thus, according to a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):5

"Do not say that Paradise is one since God Almighty says that besides those two Paradises, there are two others. Do not say either that there is solely one level, since God Almighty says some levels are higher than others and the difference in levels is a matter of degrees."

In this vein, there is a Prophetic tradition according to which

"Two Paradises are from gold for those near to God Almighty and two Paradises for the people of the Right Hand."

The blessed Verse 63 poses the oft-repeated rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both** [**jinn and men**] **deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 64-65

مُدْهَا مَّتَانِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

***64.** [**The two Gardens appear**] **dark green** [**in color owing to the density of trees**].*
65. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both** [**jinn and men**] **deny?

The Arabic word madhamma deriving from d-h-m is cognate with idhimam denoting raven black color herein connoting a garden seeming black due to the density of its trees. Since such color reflects utmost freshness of plants and trees, the expression designates utmost verdure of the twain Paradises.

According to a number of traditions, water, verdure, and beauty engender happiness and delight.6

The blessed Verse 65 further asks:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both** [**jinn and men**] **deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 66-67

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ نَضَّاخَتَانِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

66. In the two Gardens shall be two springs gushing forth.
67. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

The Arabic word nadhdhakh denotes:

"gushing forth."

Thus, the blessed Verse 67 is saying that in those two Gardens, two springs shall be gushing forth. It goes without saying that looking at natural landscapes is the best delight. Water is a Blessing and its gushing forth is another Blessing.

The blessed Verse 67 further poses the rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 68-69

فِيهِمَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَرُمَّانٌ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

68. In the two Gardens there shall be fruits and date-palms and pomegranates.
69. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Regarding the fruits of Paradise, the blessed Verse 68 is saying that there is abundance of fruits and those like dates and pomegranates in the two Gardens. The Arabic word fakiha is certainly quite broad in its range of senses encompassing all kinds of fruit, but the significance of dates and pomegranates are mentioned owing to their significance.

Some Qur'anic exegetes falsely maintain that semantically speaking, the Arabic word fakiha excludes dates and pomegranates. Lexicographers disagree with this baseless view. Basically, specific in lieu of general in cases of expressing privileges and merits is quite common. In short, dates and pomegranates have their prime of place among fruits in Paradise, since they are rich in vitamins.[7]

The blessed Verse 69 repeats the rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 70-71

فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَاتٌ حِسَانٌ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

70. There shall be women of fair face and good character in those Gardens.
71. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

The blessed Verse 70 further treats of other Divine Blessings, saying that there shall be women fair of face and good of character in these two Paradises. The Arabic word khayr generally connotes spiritual and immaterial good and beauty and the word husn generally designates beauty of looks and appearance.

A tradition narrated regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse in question enumerates many good characteristics for women in Paradise which may allude to those of women in this world and serve as a model for all women.

Such characteristics include: kindness in speech, cleanliness and purity, restraining from inflicting harms on others, and turning away their glances from those outside the circle of kinship. In short, all the physical and non-physical beauties expected in a desirable spouse may be found in them.

Likewise the blessed Qur'anic Verse expresses such good characteristics in a terse phrase:

"of fair face and good characters"

(khayrat hisan).

According to a Prophetic tradition:

"Women in Paradise have fair faces and good characters."[8]

It is also mentioned in narrations that:

"of fair face and good characters"

refers to righteous good women in this world who shall be fairer than wide-eyed huri's in Paradise.[9]

The blessed Verse 71 repeats the question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 72-73

حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِي الْخِيَامِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاء رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

72. Wide-eyed huri's of Paradise guarded in pavilions.
73. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Further depicting the women in Paradise, the blessed Verse 72 is saying that they are huris guarded in pavilions in Paradise. The word hur is the plural of hawra' denoting a woman the pupils whose eyes are raven black and the whiteness is quite transparent. It is also applied to women of fair complexion. The word maqsurat connotes that they only belong to their husbands and they are well guarded from others.

The Arabic word khiyam is the plural of khayma denoting:

"pavilion."

According to Islamic traditions, pavilions in Paradise are unlike those of this world in terms of vastness and beauty. It also worthy of note that according to lexicographers and lexicologists, the Arabic word khayma, besides denoting pavilion and tent, is also applied to wooden or any round dwelling place.

It is also said that the Arabic word designates dwelling places which are made of stones and the like.[10]

The blessed Verse 74 reiterates the rhetorical question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 74-75

لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاء رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

74. Whom no man or jinni has touched before people of Paradise.
75. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

The blessed Verse 74 enumerates another characteristic of huris in Paradise, saying that they have

been touched neither by any jinni nor by any man. In other words, they are virgin.

Thus, by:

"women of fair face and good characters"

good and righteous women of this world are intended who have solely intercourse with their husbands.

However,

"untouched"

(lam yatmithhunna) is the attribute of huris in Paradise.

According to other Qur'anic Verses, men and women who are married to each other and are amongst the believers and the people of Paradise shall join each other in Paradise and shall enjoy their lives in the best manner there. According to traditions, owing to their invocations and righteous good deeds, such women are more exalted than huris in Paradise.11

The blessed Verse 75 poses the oft-repeated question:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

Surah al-Rahman - Verses 76-77

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَى رَفْرَفٍ خُضْرٍ وَعَبْقَرِيٍّ حِسَانٍ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

76. Reclining on couches covered by the best and the most beautiful green fabrics.
77. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

The blessed Verse 76 provides the last depiction of the Blessings in Paradise, saying that the inhabitants of the twain Paradises recline on couches covered by the best and the fairest green fabrics.

The Arabic word rafraf originally denotes spread tree leaves, but it is figuratively applied to beautiful and colorful fabrics which are similar to garden landscapes. The word 'abqari originally denotes any rare or unrivalled person or thing.

Thus, the word is applied to scholars rare amongst people. It is also said that 'Abqar was the name of a city in which silk fabrics were made.12 The original sense is obsolete and the Arabic word 'abqari refers to an ingenious person who is hard to find. The Arabic word hisan is the plural form of hasan denoting

"good, beautiful."

In short, all these expressions reflect that all things in Paradise, including fruits, food, palaces, mansions, carpets, and couches are all the best and unrivaled in terms of quality. However, it is worthy of note that such expressions may not fully express such great and unique concepts but they solely reflect shadows of them same.

The blessed Verse 77 poses the oft-repeated rhetorical question for the last time:

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

It is saying that immaterial or even material Blessings in this world or Blessings of Paradise have encompassed you, but at times, owing to vanity and neglect, you consign them to oblivion and forget the One Who bestows all these Blessings and also those which you expect to fall into your share in future. Which of these Blessings do you deny?

Surah al-Rahman - Verse 78

تَبَارَكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِی الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

78. Blessed is the Name of your Lord, the Owner of Majesty and Honor.

All Blessings, beauties, rewards, and recompenses are manifestations of Divine Lordship. Thus, the last blessed Verse of the Chapter in question is saying that the Name of your Lord Who is Majestic and Glorious is Blessed and Intransient. The Arabic word tabarak is cognate with bark denoting "camel breast."

Since camels lie down somewhere without moving and their breasts touch the earth, the word connotes constancy and intransience. As remaining capital engenders many a benefit, useful things are referred to as mubarak, the worthiest being for such designation is the Pure Divine Essence, the Source of all Good and Blessings.

Thus, the blessed Verse in question is saying that Great and Glorious is the Name of your Lord Who is the Absolute Owner of Glory, Greatness, Magnanimity, Graciousness, and Bountifulness. The blessed Chapter opened with the Divine Attribute "the Most Gracious" (Rahman) denoting the Vastness of Bounties and Graciousness of the One Lord, following which different kinds of His Bounties and Blessings are enumerated.

The blessed Chapter ends in the Name of the Owner of Glory and Greatness, connoting that what He bestows springs solely from His Greatness and reflects His Glory and Magnanimity.

It is saying that you are supposed to glorify the Origin of Bounties by praising His Attributes of Glory and Greatness.

Some Qur'anic exegetes say that His Name alludes to all His Attributes and His Attributes are in His Pure Essence and the expression:

"Owner of Majesty and Glory"

makes a reference to all His Most Beautiful and Glorious Attributes.

"Owner of Majesty"

alludes to His Negative Attributes and "Owner of Glory" refers to His Positive Attributes.

It would be of interest to read a few traditions in this vein.

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) that someone invoked God Almighty in his presence, saying:

"O Owner of Majesty and Glory!"

The Noble Prophet (S) said:

*"Now that you invoked God Almighty by this Attribute, your prayer shall be answered. You ask Him to grant you anything you desire."*13

According to a Prophetic tradition, the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) noticed that a man was standing while establishing prayers. Following genuflexion (ruku'), prostration (sujud), salam, and tashahHud, he invoked God Almighty and called Him by His Attributes, Owner of Majesty, Owner of Glory, the Living (Hayy), the Ever Standing (or Self-Existent; Qayyum), the Noble Prophet (S) said:

*"This man called Allah by a Great Name that whenever one calls Him by that Attribute, He shall answer his prayers."*14

A tradition is narrated from Imam Baqir (as) regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse in question according to which he said:

*"We are Divine Majesty and Glory as He cherishes us by making his servants obey us."*15

It goes without saying that the family of the Prophet (S) solely calls people unto God Almighty and obedience to Him. They are like guides and beacons and life boats in the agitated sea of this mundane life. Thus, they are the instances of Divine Bounties bestowed by the Owner of Majesty and Glory, since God Almighty provides people with Guidance through His friends.

O Lord! You are the Owner of Majesty and Glory. By Your Majesty and Glory! Do not deprive us from

Bounties and Blessings of Paradise. O Lord! We deny none of your Blessings, but consider ourselves encompassed by them. Grant us Your Blessings at all times. Amen O Lord of the worlds!

1. Tafsir Majma‘ al-Bayan, under the blessed Verse in question.
2. Tafsir Rahnama; Tafsir Nur.
3. Tafsir Majma‘ al-Bayan; Tafsir al-Mizan.
4. Shaykh Tusi's Amali, vol. 1, p. 182.
5. Tafsir Majma‘ al-Bayan.
6. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 59, p. 44.
7. Fifteen nutritive elements and five vitamins are reportedly found in dates. Furthermore, some parts of date palms are rich in medicinal ingredients. Regarding pomegranates, according to a number of Islamic traditions, they are the best of fruits (sayyid al-fakiha; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 6, p. 63). Nutrition experts enumerate many qualities for pomegranates, including refining the blood, richness in Vitamin C. Other good qualities have also been mentioned for sweet and sour pomegranates, including: strengthening the stomach, gums, the eyes, treatment of choleric fevers, jaundice, scabies, chronic ulcers, and diarrhea.

   According to a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

   "Let your children eat pomegranates as they lead to their faster growth"

   (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 66, p. 164).

   According to another tradition,

   "Eating pomegranates by children makes them speak earlier"

   (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 66, p. 165).

   It is also narrated from Imam Baqir (as) and Imam Sadiq (as):

   "Pomegranates were the Messenger of Allah's (S) most favorite fruit."

   (Usul Kafi, vol .6, p. 352).

8. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, under the blessed Verse in question.
9. Usul Kafi, vol. 8, p. 156.
10. Lisan al-‘Arab; Majma‘ al-Bahrayn; al-Munjid.
11. Tafsir Durr al-Manthur, p. 151; Usul Kafi, vol. 8, p. 156.
12. Abu al-Futuh Razi's Tafsir.
13. Tafsir Durr al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 153; Tafsir Nimuna, under the blessed Verse in question.
14. Ibid.
15. Tafsir Burhan; Tafsir Safi, under the blessed Verse in question.

Surah al-Waqi‘a, Chapter 56, Verses 1 - 40

(The Event)
Section (juz’): 27
Number of Verses: 96

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The Chapter was revealed in Mecca and it has 96 Verses. The title of the Chapter, Waqi'a, is a designation of Resurrection whose imminence is prognosticated in the opening Verse. The majority of the blessed Verses of the Chapter treat of Resurrection, its qualities and happenings, and division of mankind into peoples of Hell and Paradise on that Day. Thus, recitation of the Chapter is awakening.

Merits of Recitation of the Chapter

Numerous traditions are to be found in Islamic sources concerning the recitation of the Chapter an instance of which is a Prophetic tradition according to which:

"One who recites Surah al-Waqi'a will be excluded from the neglectful."[1]

The blessed Verses of the Chapter are so shocking and awakening that no room is left for human neglect. It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as):

"Whoever recites Surah al-Waqi'a every Friday night, God Almighty will like him and will make him to be loved by all people. He will never suffer hardships, poverty, destitution, and other worldly afflictions. He will be amongst the friends of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as)."[2]

It goes without saying that such Blessings may not fall into the lot of one who merely recites the blessed Verses of the Chapter without attending to their significance, but recitation is supposed to follow intellection and acting upon Divine Injunctions.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 1-2

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ

لَيْسَ لِوَقْعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ

1. When the Great Event [Resurrection] befalls.
2. There can be no denial of its befalling.

As reflected in numerous Qur'anic Verses, the Events of Resurrection are initially accompanied by great and shocking happenings.

The blessed Chapter in question focuses on Resurrection and similar Events are being enumerated in its opening Verses, e.g.

"When the Great Even befalls, There can be no denial of its befalling"

since the Events preceding Resurrection shall be so shocking and awakening that their manifestations shall be reflected in all the constituent elements of the world.

The Arabic word waqi'a:

(***"event"***)

alludes to Resurrection, since it is inevitable. The word is also regarded as one of the designations of Resurrection. Some Qur'anic exegetes maintain that the Arabic word kadhiba is employed in the infinitive sense connoting that befalling of Resurrection shall be so crystal clear that it leaves no room for denial and discussion.

Some Qur'anic exegetes hold that it is used in its literal present participial sense saying that it reflects that befalling that Day is inevitable and there shall be no denial of the same.

It is worthy of note that following the blessed Qur'anic Verses on Divine Graciousness as attested in Chapter 55 (Surah al-Rahman) serve as a reminder of Resurrection which is owing to His Attribute of Graciousness and also designates that the posthumous survival of man constitutes the most exalted Emanation of His Graciousness.

According to some Qur'anic exegetes, the designation of the blessed Chapter alludes to the multiplicity of hardships to be inflicted at the Time. It is a source of encouragement for people to prepare themselves for such hard Day.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 3-4

خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ

إِذَا رُجَّتِ الْأَرْضُ رَجًّا

3. That Event lowers and elevates the system of creation and makes it upside down thus lowers the evil and elevates the good.
4. When the earth shall be shaken with a terrible shake.

Resurrection makes alterations in both the world and mankind. Thus, the blessed Verse 3 is saying that Resurrection lowers some people and elevates some others.

The arrogant, the disobedient, and the wrong-doers shall be denigrated whereas believers and righteous good-doers shall be elevated to the zenith of glory. The mighty shall be humiliated and sinners shall be cherished with no reason.

Some people shall fall into the depth of Hell and some others shall abide in the most exalted levels of Paradise. They are all the consequences of Divine Great and Encompassing Revolution.

In this vein, a tradition is narrated regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse in question from Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (as):

"Resurrection shall be lowering since by God Almighty! Enemies of Allah shall be cast into Hellfire and it shall be elevating, since by God Almighty! The friends of Allah shall be elevated to the higher levels of Paradise."[3]

Honor and humility and exalted and lower ranks shall become crystal clear on that Day as great figures have said that true poverty and affluence shall be manifest upon presenting the record of deeds before God Almighty.[4]

The blessed Verse 4 further treats of such Events, saying that Resurrection shall befall when the earth shall be shaken with a terrible shake as the occurrence of Resurrection and its terrible earthquakes is indubitable.

The word idha

(***"when"***)

is herein employed to connote inevitability.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 5-6

وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا

فَكَانَتْ هَبَاء مُّنبَثًّا

5. And the mountains shall be powdered to dust.

6. Therefore, they shall become scattering dust particles.

The blessed Verses 5 and 6 are saying that the earthquake shall be so enormous that it shall pulverize mountains into scattering dust particles. The Arabic word bussat derives from b-s-s denoting "grind by water."

The Arabic words haba' and munbath denote

"dust"

and

"scattered"

respectively. By haba' minute dust particles are intended which scatter and suspend in the air and are normally invisible unless one looks at them in sunlight penetrating into some dark place.

Now one may understand that the earthquake and the explosion are so enormous that they may pulverize colossal mountains proverbial for solidity into scattered dust particles and the shout heard from such enormous explosion shall be even more horrible. In short, Qur'anic Verses present different depictions as to different stages of the enormous explosion of mountains.

It is needless to say that only God Almighty is All-Aware of the course of such events which may not be describable in our own terms. However, such meaningful allusions all reflect the enormity of such enormous explosion.

It is worthy of note that the earth which is our abode and resting place on which we strive to make our sustenance shall be perturbed and restless on that Day such that an unprecedented earthquake shall severely agitate the earth and.

The same motif is to be found elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[5] as well:

"O mankind! Fear Lord and be dutifully to Him! Indeed, the earthquake of the Hour [***of Resurrection***] ***shall be a terrible thing."***

Thus, we are supposed to obedient and do righteous good deeds such that we may restrain ourselves from committing sins in order to avoid entanglement in torment on such Day.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 7-9

وَكُنتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَاثَةً

فَأَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ

وَأَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ

7. And you shall be in three groups on that Day.
8. Therefore, people on the Right Hand are as if they are personifications of happiness.
9. And people on the Left Hand, how unfortunate shall they be because of their vices and unhappiness.

Depiction of the Great Event of Resurrection is followed by a treatment of the conditions of people on that Day.

They are divided into three groups;

(***"And you shall be in the three groups on that Day"***).

The Arabic word jawj is not only applied to feminine and masculine but also it connotes similar objects.

Since certain people shall be similar on the Day of Resurrection, the blessed Verse 8 treats of the first group, namely

the people on the Right Hand (***ashab al-maymana***)

whom are being referred to as fortunate, since the record of their deeds are given to their right hands.

They symbolize the saved believers doing righteous good deeds. They shall be granted Divine Rewards. The Arabic word maymana is cognate with yumn which denotes happiness. Thus, the first group includes the happy and the fortunate.

The blessed Verse 9 makes mention of

the people on the Left Hand (***ashab al-mush'ama***)

who are the unfortunate people.

How unfortunate they are that the records of their deeds shall be given to their left hands owing to their misery and unhappiness. They symbolize those who committed sins and did wrong.

The expression:

"people on the Left Hand"

reflects their utmost misery and unhappiness.

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 10-14

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ

أُوْلَئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ

فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ

وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ

10. And those foremost in doing righteous good deeds shall be foremost in receiving Rewards.
11. These shall be the nearest Divine Threshold.
12. In the Gardens abounding in Blessings.
13. A multitude of those shall be from the ancients and former nations.
14. And a few of those shall be from later generations.

Taking the lead in matters of faith and doing righteous good deeds is meritorious. Those who take the lead in doing righteous good deeds in this world shall be foremost in receiving Divine Rewards. Depicting the third group, the blessed Verses 10 and 11 are saying that "those foremost shall be nearest to Divine Threshold."

The Arabic word sabiqun is ad hoc applied to those who are not only foremost in matters of faith and belief, but are also foremost in doing righteous good deeds and in matters of human ethics. They serve as people's role models and leaders as a consequence of which they are nearest to Divine Threshold.

Therefore, different Qur’anic exegetes interpret their being foremost owing to their being foremost in obedience to Allah, establishing the five daily prayers, embarking upon jihad and emigration, repentance, and the like. Thus, Qur’anic exegetes address different aspects of such broad sense.

According to Islamic traditions, the Arabic word sabiqun is applied to Habil (Abel), the believer among the family of Pharaoh, Habib Najjar, and the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali (as) owing to their being foremost in their own communities, for instance Imam ‘Ali (as) was the first man who converted to the Islamic faith.

Such instances do not restrict the semantic application of the word.

It is also worthy of note that Ibn ‘Abbas narrates from the Messenger of Allah (S) that he asked the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) concerning the exegesis of the blessed Verse in question and he replied:

*"Gabriel said unto me that they are ‘Ali (as) and his followers who shall be foremost in being admitted to Paradise and they shall be nearest to Divine Threshold owing to the respect accorded them by God Almighty."*6

These are actually the manifest and perfect instances of the aforesaid concept encompassing all who have been foremost in all nations and communities.

The blessed Verse 12 tersely depict the exalted state of:

"those nearest to Divine Threshold"

in the Gardens of Paradise abounding in Divine Blessings, saying that different material and immaterial Blessings of Paradise are in store for them. The depiction may also reflect that the Gardens of Paradise constitute the only place where Divine Blessings may be found. They stand in contrast against the gardens in this world which are the means of living and toil for mankind.

In like manner, the state of those nearest to Divine Threshold in this world is different than that of the Hereafter, since their exalted state in this world is accompanied by responsibilities, whereas the Hereafter is their resting place abounding in Blessings.

It goes without saying that "nearest" herein reflects their exalted state rather than spatial nearness, since God Almighty does not exist in space and is nearer to us than ourselves.

The blessed Verse 13 treats of the manner of diving people in former nations and the Muslim community, saying that:

"a multitude of those shall be from the ancients and former nations."

The blessed Verse 14 is saying that:

"and a few of those shall be from later generations"

in which the Arabic word thulla designates "group, multitude" and some Qur’anic exegetes maintain that it denotes "piece, part" which ad hoc connotes "enormous part."

According to the blessed Verse, a great multitude of those nearest to Divine Threshold are from former nations and few of them are from the Muslim community.

It is also worthy of note that certain believers may not be amongst those foremost in matters of belief,

but they may possess certain qualities and characteristics thereby they may be on a par with "the foremost" in terms of being granted Divine Rewards.

In this vein, traditions have been narrated from Imam Muhammad Baqir (as) who said:

"We are the foremost of the foremost and we are the last ones."[7]

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) that addressed to a number of his followers, he said:

"You are the first and the last of those foremost in loving us in this world and the foremost in being admitted to Paradise in the Hereafter."[8]

It is also worthy of note that some Qur'anic exegetes interpret the foremost and the last as the first and the last Muslim communities that are accordingly the nearest to Divine Threshold.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 15-16

عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَابِلِينَ

15. On thrones laid side by side adorned with precious stones.
16. Reclining thereon, face to face.

The blessed twain Verses treat of the material and immaterial Blessings granted to those nearest to Divine Throne on the Day of Resurrection. Such Blessings are innumerable, they are depicted in the blessed Verses in question such that man with his limited intellectual capacities be able to comprehend them.

The blessed Verses are saying that thrones shall be prepared for those nearest to Divine Throne, thrones adorned with different jewels like rubies, diamonds, and emeralds. The blessed Verse 16 is saying that the people of Paradise shall recline upon those couches and thrones while they shall be face to face enjoying each other's society without being bored of loneliness.

It might be a reference to numerous thrones laid together thus according further glory to their majestic mansions. The Arabic word surur is the plural form of sarir denoting throne and mawdhuna designates a special fabric adorned with pearls and rubies.

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 17-19

يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ

بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأْسٍ مِّن مَّعِينٍ

لَا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنزِفُونَ

17. Immortal youths shall go around them in glory and freshness,
18. With cups, jugs, and a glass of flowing springs of Paradise [or pure wine],
19. Wherefrom they shall get neither any aching of the head, nor any intoxication.

The first two blessed Verses in question are saying that the people of Paradise reclining on those magnificent thrones are in a safe place around whom boys and youths of fair face and good character possessing utmost beauty move. They were originally created in Paradise and are immortal.

They serve the people of Paradise with jugs and glasses with or without handle, namely all kinds of vessels. The third blessed Verse is saying that the people of Paradise drink from bowels filled with the wine of Paradise and pure water which may allude to the water of springs flowing in Paradise, or pure wine mingled with camphor and ginger.

Such wine causes neither headache nor intoxication. The Arabic word akwab is applied to jugs without handles and narrow mouths, similar to mundane jugs. The Arabic word abariq is the plural of ibriq denoting a vessel with a handle and a narrow mouth. Ka’s designates a glass brimming with wine or other drinks.

Ma’in is applied to drink. The verbal form yusadda‘un denotes headache. The verbal form yunzafun derives from n-z-f originally denoting gradual extraction of water from a well but it ad hoc connotes "driving mad."

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 20-21

وَفَاكِهَةٍ مِّمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ

وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ

20. And with fruit that they may choose.
21. And with the flesh of fowls that they desire.

The blessed twain Verses further treat of the material Blessings in store for the people of Paradise who are nearest to Divine Throne, saying youths in Paradise shall make available to them whatever kinds of fruits and the flesh of fowls which they desire. It is worthy of note that the precedence of fruit over flesh is that the former is healthier and consumption of fruit before meal is far better.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 22-24

وَحُورٌ عِينٌ

كَأَمْثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمَكْنُونِ

جَزَاء بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

22. And fair females with wide, lovely eyes,
23. Like pearls in shells.
24. A Reward for what they used to do.

The first twain blessed Verses are saying that the people of Paradise shall have spouses from amongst huris with fair complexions and wide black eyes who are preserved like pearls in shells. The Arabic word hur is the plural form of hawra' and ahwar, denoting those whose pupils of eyes are raven black and the whiteness of their eyes are quite transparent.

The Arabic word 'ayn, the plural forms of which are 'ayna' and a'yan, denotes "wide-eyed." The emphasis is owing to the fact that most of the beauty of mankind lies in their eyes. In other words, the spouses in Paradise are so beautiful that eyes shall be astonished by looking at them. The Arabic word maknun denotes "concealed" and it herein connotes being preserved in shells, since pearls are more transparent and more beautiful while they are still lying untouched in their shells.

The expression may connote that they are totally preserved from other people's eyes, since they are untouched and unseen by others.

The third blessed Verse is saying that the Divine Blessings shall be bestowed upon them because of their righteous good deeds, such that one may not falsely imagine that such innumerable Divine Blessings of Paradise shall be bestowed upon anyone with no reason, but being accorded such Blessings requires unfaltering belief and constant doing of righteous good deeds.

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 25-26

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْثِيمًا

إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَامًا سَلَامًا

25. No vain talk shall they hear therein, nor any sinful speech.
26. But only the saying of peace, peace!

The Arabic word laghw denotes vain talk and ta’thim is applied to ascribing committing of sin to others. There shall be no psychological pain in Paradise. Mundane pleasures usually entail vain talk and committing sins, but it is different in Paradise since it is the abode of peace and serenity.

Vain talk and sin may not penetrate a peaceful and serene community. The people of Paradise shall not hear anything but the sayings of Peace by God Almighty, the angels nearest unto Him, and the salutations and greetings exchanged amongst them.

They shall attend sessions brimming with enthusiasm, friendship, love, and purity.

Paradise is the Abode of Peace, Serenity, and Security:

(***"For them shall be the Home of Peace with their Lord. And He shall be their Protector and Helper because of what they used to do,"***)9.

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 27-29

وَأَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ

فِي سِدْرٍ مَّخْضُودٍ

وَطَلْحٍ مَّنضُودٍ

27. And those on the Right Hand, how [fortunate] shall be those on the Right Hand!
28. [They shall be] among thornless lote trees,
29. And among fragrant talh trees beautiful of color and abundant in leaves.

Following depictions of material and immaterial Blessings bestowed upon those nearest to Divine Threshold, the blessed Verses in question treat of the people of the Right Hand. They shall be the happy group whose brilliant record of deeds shall be given to their right hands.

The blessed Verse 27 makes mention of their exalted state saying that the people of the Right Hand are so fortunate. This is the best expression of their state connoting indescribable attributes. The blessed Verse 28 is saying that they shall rest beneath thornless lote trees.

It is actually the best depiction possible for human perception regarding trees in Paradise. It is narrated that a Bedouin asked the Noble Prophet (S) regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse.

The Noble Prophet of Islam (S) replied:

"God Almighty has cut off the thorns of this tree and has made fruits instead of thorns, such that the different fruits are unlike each other."[10]

The third blessed Verse is saying that they rest in the shade green, fragrant trees which are beautiful of color. Some Qur'anic exegetes say that banana trees are being intended which have quite broad, green, and beautiful leaves and sweet and delicious fruit. The Arabic word mandhud denotes "dense."

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 30-33

وَظِلٍّ مَّمْدُودٍ

وَمَاء مَّسْكُوبٍ

وَفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ

لَا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ

30. And in shade long extended,
31. And by waterfalls,
32. And fruit in plenty,
33. Whose supply is not cut off, nor are they out of reach,

The four blessed Verses further depict heavenly Blessings like long extended shades. Some Qur'anic exegetes interpret the long extended shade as a state between the twain risings when shades encompass everywhere.

According to a tradition narrated from the Noble Prophet of Islam (S),

"long extended shade"

connotes that the people of Paradise shall never be harmed by sunlight, but they shall rest in extended and pleasant shades at all times.[11]

The blessed Verse 31 is saying that the people of Paradise abide by quite beautiful waterfalls. The Arabic word maskub denotes flowing and since waterfalls create the most beautiful landscapes and its whispers gives delight to the soul and its scenery pleases the eyes, it is regarded as one of the Divine Blessings bestowed upon the people of Paradise.

The blessed Verse 32 is saying that such trees and flowing water are accompanied by different fruits. Thus, the blessed Verse 33 is saying that fruits of Paradise are different from those of this world in that they are never cut off nor are they out of reach.

Fruits of this world are limited to certain seasons and solely appear on branches for a few weeks or months. Besides heavenly fruits never entail harms for certain people, namely, unlike fruits of this world, they possess general availability.

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 34-37

وَفُرُشٍ مَّرْفُوعَةٍ

إِنَّا أَنشَأْنَاهُنَّ إِنشَاء

فَجَعَلْنَاهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا

عُرُبًا أَتْرَابًا

34. And endeared women.
35. Indeed, We created them of a novel creation.
36. And made all of them virgins.
37. Loving their husbands and of equal age, fluent, and sweet of tongue.

Referring to another Blessing, the blessed Verse 34 is saying that the people of Paradise have cherished women. The Arabic word furush is the plural form of firash originally denoting any kind of bed spread for rest.

It is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali (as) that concerning the exegesis of the blessed Verse he said:

"Precious carpets are herein intended which are spread on their couches."

Some Qur’anic exegetes maintain that by furush, women are intended, since woman is termed thus in the Arabic tongue. The adjective marfu‘a connotes their exalted state in terms of beauty and endearment.

The blessed Verses 35-37 enumerate four characteristics for huris in Paradise. Firstly, they are women in Paradise who have been created in Paradise rather than in this world. Secondly, they are virgins.

Thirdly, they love their husbands. Fourthly, they are thirty three years of age. According to some traditions, all the people of Paradise are fair of complexion, pure, and hairless of body and have black eyes and very beautiful hair.

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 38-40

لِأَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ

وَثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ

38. All these are for the people on the Right Hand.
39. A multitude of those** [**on the Right Hand**] **shall be from former nations.
40. And a multitude of those** [**on the Right Hand**] **shall be from the later generations.

All these Blessings are in store for the people on the Right Hand who are righteous good-doing believers. Since the records of their deeds shall be given to their right hands and they shall be called the fortunate and the happy, they are designated as the people on the Right Hand.

It is worthy of note that the state of those nearest to Divine Threshold may not be compared to that of the people of the Right Hand, because the former abide within the proximity of God Almighty whereas the latter dwell in the affluence of Blessings.

The Arabic word thulla in the third and the fourth blessed Verses in question originally denotes a piece of wool, though it connotes large number and multitude. Qur’anic exegetes differ as to the contextual meanings of "a multitude from former nations" and "a multitude from the later generations.

The majority of the exegetes, based on the contents of certain traditions, maintain that

"former nations"

and

"later generations"

both refer to those nations living before the Noble Prophet's (S) community. However, some Qur'anic exegetes hold that the former designates pre-Islamic nations and the latter refers to the community of the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) whose population is twice the former.

1. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan; Tafsir Burhan.
2. Majma' al-Bayan; Tafsir Burhan, under the blessed Verse in question; Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn. Other traditions narrated in this vein are to be found in tradition and exegetic sources; however, they were not cited for the sake of brevity.
3. Saduq's Khisal; Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, under the blessed Verse in question.
4. Ghurar al-Hikam.
5. 22:1
6. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, under the blessed Verse in question; Tafsir Safi; Khisal; Ikmal al-Din; Tafsir Burhan, under the blessed Verse in question. The tradition is also attested in some Sunni sources including exegetic works.
7. Tafsir Safi, under the blessed Verse in question; Tafsir Atyab al-Bayan and other exegetic works.
8. Tafsir Safi; Tafsir Burhan; see also other exegetic works.
9. 6:127
10. Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani; Durr al-Manthur, under the blessing Verse in question.
11. Rawdha al-Kafi; Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 216.

Surah al-Waqi'a, Verses 41 - 96

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 41-44

وَأَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ

فِي سَمُومٍ وَحَمِيمٍ

وَظِلٍّ مِّن يَحْمُومٍ

لَّا بَارِدٍ وَلَا كَرِيمٍ

41. And those on the Left Hand, how [unfortunate] shall be those on the Left Hand!
42. They are in fierce hot winds and boiling water,
43. And shadow of black smoke,
44. That shadow is neither cool nor pleasant,

Following a treatment of the great Blessings of those nearest to Divine Threshold and the people of the Right Hand, the blessed Verses in question deal with the horrible and excruciating torments in store for the people on the Left Hand in order to make a comparison between the three groups, saying that the people on the Left Hand shall be so unfortunate that the records of their deeds shall be given unto their left hands symbolizing that they are sinners, impure, wrong-doers, and worthy of being cast into Hellfire.

Then, three torments of theirs are being enumerated: They are in fierce hot winds and boiling water; they are in a shadow of stifling and burning smoke; the fierce hot winds on the one hand and the boiling water and the stifling and hot smoke on the other side entangle them in such manner that they may not bear it any longer. Even if they be not chastised with further torments, their suffering suffices to punish them.

The blessed Verse 44 is saying that they shall be in a shadow which shall be neither cool nor pleasant. Shadows preserves man from direct sunlight, winds, and showers at times, but it is manifest they their shadows shall be unpleasant since they are but stifling black smoke which may solely harm.

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 45-47

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُتْرَفِينَ

وَكَانُوا يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى الْحِنثِ الْعَظِيمِ

وَكَانُوا يَقُولُونَ أَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَئِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ

45. Indeed, before that they indulged in luxury,
46. And were persisting in committing grave sins.
47. And they used to say: "When we die and become dust and bones shall we then indeed be resurrected?

The sources of the sufferings of the people on the Left Hand are expressed tersely in three clauses. Firstly, they were vain and indulged in the pleasures of the flesh in this world. The Arabic word mutraf is applied to one who is vain and rebellious owing to indulgence in mundane pleasures.[1]

It is true that all the people on the Left Hand are not amongst those indulging in affluence and those who

disobeyed Divine Commands. The Holy Qur'an refers to their chiefs. Likewise we notice that corruptions in human societies are due to the vanity and obduracy of those who lead others astray.

Such wrong-doers are the main sources of all the battles and bloodsheds and concupiscent inclinations. Thus, the Holy Qur'an above all points at them. It is worthy of note that Blessings include youth, health, and long life besides material possessions which should be employed toward Divine Satisfaction.

The blessed Verse 46 is saying that they persisted in committing grave sins. The Arabic word hinth originally denotes any kind of sin, but the word is mainly applied to breaking one's promise and turning away from one's word, since they are manifest instances of sins.

Thus, the characteristics of the people on the Left Hand does not solely lie in committing sins, but their persistence in committing grave sins, since the people on the Right Hand may commit sins as well, but they never persist in committing sins and when they see that they have sinned, they immediately repent.

Some Qur'anic exegetes interpret the Arabic phrase hinth 'adim as polytheism, since it is the gravest sin as it is reflected elsewhere in the Glorious Qur'an:

"Indeed, Allah forgives not that partners be associated with Him in worship, but He forgives except that anything else to whom He wills; and whoever sets up partners with Allah in worship, he has verily invented a grave sin."

Some also maintain that:

"grave sin"

is applied to lying which is the gravest sin and the source of committing other grave sins, particularly instances which entail denial of Prophets (as) and Resurrection. However, the general meaning of the blessed Verse reflects that these are all instances of "great sin."

The blessed Verse 47 is saying that their evil deeds included their saying that when they die and turn into bones and dust, they may not be raised from the dead. Thus, denial of Resurrection is the source of many a sin and the same constitutes another characteristic of the people on the Left Hand.

The expression:

"they used to say"

reflects that they persisted in the denial of Resurrection even though they witnessed the scenes of Resurrection in this world. They saw that animate beings like plants withered away and turned into dust, but they were rejuvenated.

They neglected the fact that One Who basically created the world in the beginning shall be Omnipotent to recreate the world of existence, but they persisted in the denial of Resurrection.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 48-50

أَوَ آبَاؤُنَا الْأَوَّلُونَ

قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ

لَمَجْمُوعُونَ إِلَى مِيقَاتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ

48. "And also our forefathers?"
49. Say: "Indeed, those of old, and those of later times,
50. "All shall certainly be gathered together on an appointed Day.

Addressed to the Noble Prophet of Islam (S), the blessed Verses in question say unto him that the former and the later generations of them from amongst their forefathers to their last generation see the light in this world and they shall all get together on an appointed Day when shall meet one another and the records of their deeds shall be investigated.

The Arabic word miqat ("meeting place") is cognate with waqt denoting a certain time appointed for carrying out something and it herein connotes the appointed time for Resurrection, in which all mankind shall meet so that their records of deeds be investigated.

The word miqat is also applied to a certain place appointed for carrying out something, like those of pilgrimage to Mecca where pilgrims put on their pilgrimage garbs (ihram). The blessed Verses in question clearly reflect that all mankind shall be resurrected on the same day and the same is also attested in other Qur'anic Verses.

It goes without saying that the appointed time of Resurrection is only known by God Almighty and others, even His Messengers (as) and archangels nearest unto Him, are unaware of it.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verse 51-53

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا الضَّالُّونَ الْمُكَذِّبُونَ

لَآكِلُونَ مِن شَجَرٍ مِّن زَقُّومٍ

فَمَالِؤُونَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ

51. "Then moreover, indeed you the erring deniers!
52. "You indeed shall eat of the tree of Zaqqum.
53. "Then you shall fill your bellies therewith.

Proceeding with the enumeration of the chastisements of the people on the Left Hand, the blessed Verses 51-53 address them saying:

"Then, O erring deniers! You shall eat of the tree of Zaqqum filling your bellies by it."

The preceding Verses just treated of the dwelling place of the people on the Left Hand in Hell, but the blessed Verses in question deal with their food. In this respect, they stand in contrast to those nearest unto Divine Threshold and the people on the Right Hand.

It is worthy of note that the phrase

"the erring deniers"

mentioned in the blessed Verse 51 is applied to those who besides erring they are obdurate against Truth and persist in their error. As mentioned above, Zaqqum is a bitter, foul of smell and taste, whose juice is inflammatory. It is at times applied to any disgusting food given to the people of Hell.[2]

The clause:

"Then you shall fill your bellies therewith"

reflects that they shall be so hungry that they devour such disgusting food and fill up their bellies with it.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 54-56

فَشَارِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ

فَشَارِبُونَ شُرْبَ الْهِيمِ

هَذَا نُزُلُهُمْ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ

54. "And drink boiling water on top of it.
55. "And you shall drink it like thirsty camels!"

56. That shall be their preliminary entertainment on the Day of Resurrection!

The blessed Verses in question are saying that when they eat the disgusting food, they become thirsty. But, what shall their drink be? The blessed Qur'anic Verses reflect that they shall drink boiling water on top of the disgusting food such that they are likened to thirsty camels suffering from dropsy or edema. Camels afflicted with the disease get so thirsty and drink so much water that they perish.

This is the fate of the erring and the deniers on the Day of Resurrection. The Arabic word hamim denotes very hot and boiling water. The Arabic phrase wali hamim is applied to a very intimate friend.

The word hammam ("bathroom") is a cognate of the same. The word him is applied to burning thirst or dropsy with which camels may be afflicted. Some Qur'anic exegetes maintain that the word is applied to sandy deserts absorbing water even in large quantities.

The blessed Verse 56 makes another reference to the food and drink in question saying that they shall be their means of entertainment. Au contraire, the people on the Right Hand rest in very pleasant shades and eat of the best fruits and drink of sweet spring water and pure wine and are absorbed in Divine Love.

Thus, there shall be a great difference between the twain groups. The Arabic word nuzul is applied to the preliminary entertainment provided for the company who are ad hoc disbelievers and further excruciating torments shall be in store for them.

Thus, God Almighty is Just and His Chastisements are Fair. All hardships are the consequences of deeds and that Day shall be the Day of Recompense and Reward.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 57-61

نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ فَلَوْلَا تُصَدِّقُونَ

أَفَرَأَيْتُم مَّا تُمْنُونَ

أَأَنتُمْ تَخْلُقُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْخَالِقُونَ

نَحْنُ قَدَّرْنَا بَيْنَكُمُ الْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ

عَلَى أَن نُّبَدِّلَ أَمْثَالَكُمْ وَنُنشِئَكُمْ فِي مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

57. We created you then why do you believe not?

58. Have you seen what is emitted into wombs?

59. Is it you who create it in the form of man, or are We the Creator?

60. We have decreed death to you all, and We are not outstripped.

61. To transfigure you and create you in forms that you know not.

Resuming the treatment of deniers of Resurrection, the blessed Verses in question deal with the arguments substantiating Resurrection. Such arguments strengthen the pillars of faith and belief in Resurrection and ensure man of the Divine Promises concerning those nearest unto Divine Threshold, the people on the Right Hand, and the people on the Left Hand.

They open with saying that God Almighty created you. Why do you not believe in recreation? Why are you surprised on Resurrection and physical raising of the dead after having been turned to dust? Did He not create you from earth? Why do you deny it?

The argument is like the one attested elsewhere in the Glorious Qur'an[3] saying:

"And he puts forth for Us a parable and forgets his own creation. He says: "Who will give life to these bones after they are rotten and have turned into dust?" Say: "He shall give life to them Who created them for the first time! And He is the Omniscient of every creation!"

The blessed Verses 58 and 59 read:

"Have you seen what is emitted into wombs? Is it you who create it in the form of man [*through different embryonic stages*]*, or are We the Creator* [*Who each and every day turns the insignificant and worthless semen into a new form and recreate everything*]*?"*

Do you cause all these astonishing developments perplexing all thinkers or is it God Almighty Who causes them? Is the He Who is All-Able to Recreate everything unable to raise the dead on the Day of Resurrection?

Furthermore, taking into account the findings of modern scientists concerning this seemingly insignificant drop, it becomes manifest that it is a combination of male sperm and female ovum. Sperm constitutes microscopic cells and two to five hundred million spermatozoa, as large as the population of a number of countries, upon each ejaculation.[4]

It is a source of surprise that such microscopic cell grows with an astounding speed following its intermingling with ovum and makes human cells. Although all the cells are seemingly alike, but they immediately divide and form the heart, the limbs, the ears and eyes and each of them move to its particular place.

In short, semen undergoes drastic development in the embryonic stage until the infant sees the light. All these developments occur in the light of constant Divine Creatorship. It is worthy of note that the form of

human beings is simply made through the ejaculation of semen into womb. Is it not a manifest argument for Resurrection substantiating that Divine Omnipotence shall raise the dead?

The blessed Verse 60 is saying that God Almighty decreed death to all and He is not outstripped by anyone. He shall never be vanquished. Decreeing death does not mean that He cannot bestow everlasting life.

Consequently, the blessed Verse 61 is saying that decreeing death aims at taking away some of you and substituting you with others and finally at recreating you in another world unknown to you. Thus, the law of death clearly reflects that the world is a passage rather than a permanent abode. It is like a bridge rather than the destination, since had it been the destination, it would have been intransient.

In short, based on these blessed Verses, one may draw three conclusions. Firstly, the creation and emergence of human beings and all the world of existence is dependent upon Divine Omnipotence and he is outstripped by no one. Secondly, human survival and life span are dependent upon Divine Will. Thirdly, God Almighty Who created you out of nothing is All-Able to turn you into those like you.

It may intend to say that God Almighty is All-Able to make you perish and recreate human beings like you. It may also indicate that He is Omnipotent to turn you into beings upon Resurrection of whom you are unaware. In other words, God Almighty is All-Able to make you appear in your own dispositions and characters.

The last justification rests on the blessed Qur'anic Verse:

"And We make you in forms of which you are unaware"

and also many traditions reflecting that mankind shall enter the Plain of Resurrection in the forms of their deeds.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verse 62

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ النَّشْأَةَ الْأُولَى فَلَوْلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

62. And indeed, you have already known the first form of creation: why then do you not believe in recreation?

The blessed Verse 62 reminds man that he was created in this world and proceeded through the course of all the developments of creation from the time that he was a drop of semen to the last stage of development. He proceeded through all the stages constantly from potentiality into actuality and from deficiency to perfection.

Man comprehends through experiments and his experience that each and every being proceeds on the path toward perfection such that they may attaint to the goal of their creation. Now, why does he not acknowledge that as the noblest of creatures, he is supposed to proceed on the path of perfection to attain a certain goal?

It is evident that man may not attain to his final goal without another creation such that he may attain to his last actuality and the final goal of his existence. Failing to attain to such final goal, his creation as well as that of the world which is created for his perfection will be of no avail and the Absolutely All-Wise Creator may never act unwisely.

Thus, it shall be on Resurrection that each and every being shall attain to its final goal, perfection, actuality. Thus, man shall see the Recompense of his deeds and shall find everlasting life.

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 63-67

أَفَرَأَيْتُم مَّا تَحْرُثُونَ

أَأَنتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ

لَوْ نَشَاء لَجَعَلْنَاهُ حُطَامًا فَظَلَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ

إِنَّا لَمُغْرَمُونَ

بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ

63. Have you ever thought about what you have sown in the ground?
64. Is it you that make it grow, or are We the Grower?
65. Were it Our Will, We could crumble it to dry pieces and you would be left in perplexity.
66. Such that you say "Indeed, we are verily losers!
67. "Nay, but we are deprived and unfortunate."

The blessed Verses in question as well as the following ones refer to three arguments each of which bear testimony to Divine Omnipotence in human life: creation of seeds, water, and fire as the three pillars of human life.

Seeds of crops constitute the most important elements of nutrition; water is the most important drink; fire

is the most important means for the preparation of food and carrying out other life issue.

Thus, the blessed Verse 63 asks:

"What you ever thought about what you sow in the ground?"

The blessed Verse 64 further asks:

"Do you make it grow or We make it grow?"

It would be of interest to notice that the verbal form tahruthun ("you sow seeds") derives from h-r-th "sow seeds and preparing them for growth" but the verbal form tazra‘un ("you cultivate") is from the root z-r-‘ ("to cultivate, to farm"). It is evident that man only sows but God Almighty is He Who makes the seeds grow.

In this vein, a tradition is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S), saying:

"Do not say that you cultivated, but say that you sowed, since God Almighty is the True Cultivator."[5]

The reason is that man's role in the process of agriculture is like that of his in the process of procreation, namely he solely throws seeds or ejaculates semen and It is God Almighty Who causes the growth of a microscopic cell in favorable conditions. The seed uses the nutritive elements available in it, sprouts, and develops roots; then it uses the nutritive elements in the soil with an astounding speed.

The enormous laboratory of the plant functions and makes the stems, leaves, and clusters and at times one single seed engenders hundreds or even thousands of seeds. Scientists maintain that such laboratory is far more sophisticated and perplexing than those used in a highly developed industrial city with its numerous factories. Now, God Almighty Who created such system through His Omnipotence is also All-Able to raise the dead.

The blessed Verse 65 is saying:

"Were it Our Will, We could crumble it to dry pieces and you would be left in perplexity."

God Almighty is All-Able to cause venomous winds blow onto seeds such that they nip them in the bud or afflict them with other blights, like locusts. He may even cause lightning destroy them such that a bunch of withered pieces may remain. Then, you will be perplexed and regretful.

Now, were you the true cultivators, such things would have never happened. Therefore, you should know that such Blessings spring from another source.

The Arabic word hutam, deriving from h-t-m, originally denotes "breaking something" but it is often applied to breaking dried up things, like rotten bones or withered stems. The word herein connotes "hay."

Some Qur’anic exegetes also maintain that the word may ad hoc connote rotting of seeds underneath the earth and thus impeding them from growth.[6]

The Arabic verbal form tafakkahun ("you are left in perplexity") is a cognate of fakiha ("fruit") and fukaha ("witticism; jokes [as the fruit of friendly assemblies]") derives from f-k-h which is at times, as in the blessed Verse in question, employed in the sense of "to be perplexed."

The blessed Verses 66 and 67 read:

"You are astounded saying that you are verily losers. But we are totally deprived and unfortunate."

Were you the true cultivators, would you have the same fate? Such instances clearly reflect that He is the One Who makes an insignificant seed grow into a fresh plant which may engender hundreds or even thousands of seeds. Such plants are the food for men and their leaves, stems, and branches are fodder; even their roots and other parts may be used as herbs in curing different ailments.

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 68-70

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ الْمَاء الَّذِي تَشْرَبُونَ

أَأَنتُمْ أَنزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ الْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنزِلُونَ

لَوْ نَشَاء جَعَلْنَاهُ أُجَاجًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ

68. Have you thought about the water that you drink.
69. Is it you who cause it from the rain clouds to come down, or are We the Causer of it to come down?
70. If We willed, We indeed could make it salt: why then do you not give thanks?

These blessed Verses further treat of Resurrection reflecting Divine Omnipotence over everything including raising of the dead.

The blessed Verse 68 asks:

"Have you thought about the water that you drink?"

The blessed Verse 69 poses the question:

"Is it you who cause it from the rain clouds to come down, or are We the Causer of it to come down?"

The Arabic word muzn denotes white rain cloud. The Arabic word ujaj is applied to salty and bitter water. These Verses make human conscience encounter a series of questions and make them acknowledge Divine Omnipotence. The blessed Verse 68 is asking men that have they ever thought about the water as their means of subsistence.

Who is commanding the sun to shine upon the face of oceans, purify salty and bitter water and make it into pure and sweet water and evaporate it? Who commands vapors to condense into rain? Who commands winds to move clouds and send them over scorched and dead lands?

Who has made higher strata of atmosphere to lose the capacity to absorb the vapor when it is cold as a consequence of which vapors turn into rain drops descending unfalteringly upon lands? If the sun ceases to shine for one year, winds cease to blow, higher strata of atmosphere keep vapors, and the heaven fails to send down rain, you shall die of thirst and your animals, gardens, and farms shall die.

God Almighty who is All-Able to bestow such blessings easily upon you through such means shall be Omnipotent to raise the dead like the dead lands which are rejuvenated through absorption of rain. All these instances reflect Divine Unity and Glory.

How is it that you do not show gratitude for Divine Blessings? Had He willed, he would have allowed aquatic mineral to evaporate into the heaven to form salty and bitter rain clouds raining bitter brine like sea water, but it is through His Divine Omnipotence that he does not allow minerals as well as noxious microbes to evaporate onto the heaven thus polluting rain drops.

Consequently, if the air happens to be free from pollution, rain water is the purest and sweetest water.

It is also worthy of attention that the Noble Prophet (S) when desiring to drink water said:

"Praise be to the Lord Who through His Graciousness, made pure and sweet water available to us without making available bitter and salty water unto us."[7]

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 71-74

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ النَّارَ الَّتِي تُورُونَ

أَأَنتُمْ أَنشَأْتُمْ شَجَرَتَهَا أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنشِؤُونَ

نَحْنُ جَعَلْنَاهَا تَذْكِرَةً وَمَتَاعًا لِّلْمُقْوِينَ

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ

71. Have you seen the fire which you kindle?

72. Is it you who made the tree thereof to grow, or are We the Grower?

73. We have made it a Reminder [***of Hellfire***] ***and an article of use for the travelers.***

74. Then, glorify with praises the Name of your Lord, the Most Glorified.

The blessed Verses in question treat of the last argument presented for the acknowledgement of Resurrection. It is the creation of fire which is the most significant means of human life and the most effective means in all industries.

The blessed Verse 71 is asking:

"Have you ever thought about the fire which you kindle? Have you created the trees wherewith you kindle fire or We have created them?"

The Arabic verbal form tawrun

(***"you kindle"***)

is cognate with wara and ira' denoting "covering" and connoting the fire potential in the means of making fire which appears through sparkling. It is worthy of note that today we make use of matches, lighters, and the like to make fire but formerly iron and flint were used for making fire.

Arabs of Hijaz used two trees growing in deserts named murkh and 'affar for kindling fire such that the former was placed underneath and the latter was struck against it and they sparkled like flint stones.

Some Qur'anic exegetes maintain that the blessed Verses in question reflect Divine Omnipotence by saying that it is through His Will that fire is potentially existent in the wood of such trees as He created fire in the "green tree" (shajar akhdhar) despite the fact that trees live by water.

God Almighty Who created fire and water beside each other or even one in the other. Then, why do you say that He cannot raise the dead on the Day of Resurrection?

The blessed Verse 73 further adds:

"We have made it a Reminder [***of Hellfire***] ***and an article of use for the travelers."***

Emergence of fire from green trees reminds raising of the dead on the Day of Resurrection on the one hand and fire serves as a reminder for Hellfire on the other; as it is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

"The fire which you kindle

is one part of the seventy parts of Hellfire."[8]

Finally, fire is one of the most significant discoveries in making which God Almighty makes all the contributions and human contributions are quite insignificant. Furthermore, it was through the discovery of fire that man entered another phase of civilization. The Glorious Qur'an tersely alludes to all these truths by such brief clause.

It is also worthy of note that the immaterial benefit of fire, namely reminding man of Hellfire and the Day of Resurrection, precedes the material use of the same, since the former bears further significance and plays the fundamental role in this respect.

The blessed Verse 74 draws a conclusion by saying:

"Then, glorify with praises the Name of your Lord, the Most Glorified."

God Almighty, the Creator of all these Blessings each of which serve as a reminder of Resurrection and Divine Unity, Omnipotence, and Greatness, deserves to be praised and glorified of any defect and fault. He is the Lord and the Greatest, the All-Mighty, the Omnipotent. The blessed Verse seemingly addresses the Noble Prophet (S), but it actually addresses all mankind.

It would be of interest to make mention of three meaningful traditions regarding the blessed Verses narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) and the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as).

1. According to Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani, it is narrated from Imam 'Ali (as) that one night when he was establishing his prayer reciting Surah al-Waqi'a, he came unto the blessed Verses:

"Have you seen what is emitted into wombs? Is it you who create it in the form of man, or are We the Creator?"

he said thrice:

"Yes, You are the Creator of man, O Lord!"

When he came unto the blessed Verse:

"Is it you that make it grow, or are We the Grower?"

he said thrice:

"Yes, You are the Tue Cultivator, O Lord!"

When he came unto the blessed Verse:

"Is it you who cause it from the rain clouds to come down, or are We the Causer of it to come down?"

he said thrice:

"Yes, You are the One Who send down rain from clouds, O Lord!"[9]

The tradition reflects that man is supposed to provide positive replies against the rhetorical questions attested in the Glorious Qur'an, as if God Almighty is speaking unto him. The, he is supposed to rejuvenate its truth in his soul and refrain from reciting Qur'anic Verses without paying attention to their significance.

2. It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

"Never withhold your available extra water, pasture, and water from Allah's servants since God Almighty has placed it at the disposal of travelers and the needy."[10]

3. It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) that upon the Revelation of the blessed Verse:

"Then, glorify with praises the Name of your Lord, the Most Glorified"

he said

"Use it as your formula of genuflexion (ruku') in establishing your prayers,"

namely say:

"Glorified and Praised is my Great Lord" (subhan rabbi al-a'la wa bi-hamdih).

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 75-78

فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِمَوَاقِعِ النُّجُومِ

وَإِنَّهُ لَقَسَمٌ لَّوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ

إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ

فِي كِتَابٍ مَّكْنُونٍ

75. Therefore, I swear by the place of the stars and their places of rising and setting.
76. And indeed that is a great oath, if you but know.
77. That is verily an Honorable Qur'an.
78. Which is in the well-preserved Tablet.

The blessed Verses in question treat of the significance of the Glorious Qur'an, since the questions of Prophethood and Revelation of the Holy Qur'an, in terms of doctrinal fundamentals, stand second in significance to the questions of Creation and Resurrection. Furthermore, the Holy Qur'an treats of profound discussions in the domains of the principles of Divine Unity and Resurrection thereby it forms the solid bases of the same.

The blessed Verses in this series open with a great oath, saying:

"Therefore, I swear by the place of the stars and their places of rising and setting."

The majority of Qur'an exegetes maintain that the Arabic particle la is herein employed in the sense of an emphatic particle rather than the negative particle, as it is attested in other blessed Qur'anic Verses regarding oaths taken to the Day of Resurrection, the concupiscent soul, the Lord of easts and wests, and the like.

It is worthy of note that the Arabic phrase mawaqi' al-nujum designates the resting place and motion of stars, since the oath taken to the course of celestial bodies is far more significant than that taken to them per se, as the greatness and vastness of the places of rest for stars are thousands times more than planets.

Today, it is known to us that each of the stars has its own fixed place and their orbits are determined and precisely calculated by the law of gravity and repellence and the velocity of their courses is determined by a specific order.

Although it is not possible to make precise calculations regarding remote planets, but the same is quite possible regarding the celestial bodies of the solar system and the order of their orbits is astoundingly precise.

Paying attention to the fact that according to scientists, there exist approximately one thousand million stars and planets in our galaxy and the fact that there are many galaxies in the world each of which follow a certain course, the significance of this Qur'anic oath is further clarified.

Astronomers maintain (and it is reflected in the Book of Allah and tradition sources) that these celestial bodies, whose number exceeds billions and solely some of which are visible and may be photographed by using astronomical equipment like telescopes, all move in their specific orbits and they may not transgress the gravitation of others and cause collisions.

Such scientific discoveries further clarify the significance of the aforesaid oath.

Thus, the Holy Qur'an proceeds to say that

"and indeed that is a great oath, if you but know."

The Arabic verbal form law ta‘lamun ("if you know") clearly reflects that human knowledge at that time failed to fully comprehend the fact in question and it is regarded as one of the scientific miracles of the Holy Qur’an, since at that time some people still considered stars as silver nails driven into the firmament.

Thus, such expression is that milieu which is termed the age of ignorance is quite extraordinary.

Now let us turn to the reason lying behind such great oath. The reason is to be found in the blessed Verse 77:

"That is verily an Honorable Qur’an."

Thus, obdurate polytheists persisting in believing that such blessed Verses were a kind of soothsaying and they sprang from madness, or they had been inspired by devils as they thought that poets at the time were thus inspired, but the Holy Qur’an is saying that the blessed Verses are Divine Revelation reflecting greatness and originality and their contents indicate that they are Revealed by God Almighty.

It is quite evident and one is needless to provide arguments for the same. The Attribute karim employed for the Glorious Qur’an refers to God Almighty, the Most Generous and the Most Benevolent and the same attribute also designates a human virtue.

The Arabic word also reflects the great merits of the Holy Qura’n and its eloquence and rhetorical figures as well as its interesting contents; since it is revealed by the Lord Who is the Origin of perfection and beauty. God Almighty is the Origin of the Revelation as well as the Goal of the Holy Qur’an.

The blessed Verse 78 treats of the Attributes of the Holy Qur’an, saying:

"Which is in the well-preserved Tablet."

The point is that Divine Omniscience is free from any error or alteration and it is evident that such Book originating from such Sublime Source whose original version is in the well-preserved Tablet is far from any error and alteration.

Surah al-Waqi‘a - Verses 79-82

لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلاّ الْمُطَهَّرُونَ

تَنزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

أَفَبِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَنتُم مُّدْهِنُونَ

وَتَجْعَلُونَ رِزْقَكُمْ أَنَّكُمْ تُكَذِّبُونَ

79. Which none can touch but the purified.
80. A Revelation from the Lord of the worlds.
81. Do you regard the Word, the Holy Qur'an possessing the aforesaid Attributes insignificant?
82. And instead of thanking Allah for the provisions He gives you, you deny it?

The blessed Verse 79 treats of the third Attribute of the Holy Qur'an, saying:

"Which none can touch but the purified."

Following traditions narrated by the Infallible Imams (as), many Qur'an exegetes maintain that the Holy Qur'an may not be touched by the impure, namely those who have not performed the minor and major ritual ablutions (wudhu, ghusl).

However, some others hold that the blessed Verse refers to the pure angels who know the Holy Qur'an or served as intermediaries of Revelation conveying the Divine Message to the Noble Prophet's (S) heart. It stands in contrast to the polytheists' belief as per which such words were inspired by devils.

Some exegetes also believe that the sublime truths and meanings of the Holy Qur'an may solely be comprehended by the pure, as it is reflected elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[11]:

"This is the Book whereof there is no doubt, a Guidance to the God fearing."

In other words, possession of minimum purity required for the spirit of truth seeking is needed for the minimum comprehension of its meanings. The purer one becomes, the more one may understand the meanings and the contents of the Holy Qur'an.

It is worthy of note, however, that the three exegeses are not inconsistent and the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse may reflect all the three exegeses.

According to the traditions narrated from Ahl al-Bayt, Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha (as) is quoted as saying:

"Do not touch the Holy Qur'an without having performed the minor and major ablution (*wudhu, ghusl*) *as God Almighty says:*

'None but the pure touch it.'"[12]

Similar traditions have been narrated from Imam Baqir (as) and Imam Sadiq (as) with minor alterations.[13]

Similar traditions are attested in Sunni sources amongst which mention may be made of the tradition

recurrently narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

"None but the pure may touch the Holy Qur'an."[14]

A tradition is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas concerning spiritual touch:

"The Holy Qur'an is in the Concealed Book [*the Preserved Tablet*] *recorded on pure pages and none but the pure, namely those nearest unto Divine Threshold, may touch it."*[15]

The point stands to reason as well since although the Holy Qur'an has been revealed for guiding all mankind and we know that there were many people who heard the Noble Prophet (S) recite Qur'anic Verses and had access to the pure water of truth springing from the fountainhead of Revelation, but they were preoccupied with bias, obduracy, and enmity as a consequence of which they could not benefit from it in the least.

However, those who purified their selves and turned to Divine Revelation through their truth seeking attitude, attained to Guidance. Thus, the more one purifies himself and fear God Almighty, the more they comprehend more profound meanings of the Holy Qur'an. Thus, the blessed Verse in question applies to both material and spiritual dimensions.

It goes without saying that the Noble Prophet (S), the Infallible Imams (as) and the Archangels nearest unto Divine Threshold are nearest to God Almighty and further comprehend the Qur'anic truths, since they are the treasures of Divine Secrets and the Trust of Divine Light and they are the interpreters and expounders of the Holy Qur'an and eminent scholars who have attained to the purity and knowledge emanating from the Light of Divine Guardianship according to their capacities stand second to them in the interpretation and exposition of Qur'anic knowledge and learning.

The blessed Verses 80 and 81 treat of the last Attribute of the Holy Qur'an saying that it is revealed by the Lord of the worlds, the Lord and Fosterer of all the inhabitants of the worlds. The Holy Qur'an was revealed to His Noble Prophet's (S) heart for the Guidance of mankind, such that as He is the Owner and Fosterer of the world of existence, all legislation is from Divine Source.

The blessed Verse 81 is asking whether disbelievers underestimate the Holy Qur'an possessing the said Attributes, whereas the tokens of its Veracity and Truth are crystal clear. Divine Word is supposed to be acknowledged with utmost seriousness and encounter the same as a great reality.

"This word"

(hadha al-hadith) refers to the Holy Qur'an and the Arabic verbal form mudhinun ("you underestimate") derives from dahn denoting "oil," since it is used for softening the body or other things.

The Arabic gerund idhan denotes toleration and gentility and at times the same connotes softness and

lack of serious encounter. Since liars and hypocrites are often mild in their disposition, the word may connote denial and belying and both meanings are possible for the blessed Verse in question.

The blessed Verse 82 is saying that disbelievers, instead of showing gratitude for Divine Blessings, particularly the great Blessing of the Revelation of the Holy Qur'an, they deny it. Some Qur'an exegetes maintain that the blessed Verse intends to say that their share of the Holy Qur'an is denying it or that they make use of such denial to earn their sustenance.

However, the former exegesis is further consistent with the preceding blessed Verses. It may also mean that the Holy Qur'an is their spiritual sustenance and it may rejuvenate their hearts and by attending to its blessed Verses they may strengthen their hearts and their souls, but owing to their denial and enmity, they deprive themselves of it.[16]

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 83-87

فَلَوْلَا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلْقُومَ

وَأَنتُمْ حِينَئِذٍ تَنظُرُونَ

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنكُمْ وَلَكِن لَا تُبْصِرُونَ

فَلَوْلَا إِن كُنتُمْ غَيْرَ مَدِينِينَ

تَرْجِعُونَهَا إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

83. Then why do you not intervene when the soul of a dying person reaches the throat?
84. And you at the moment are looking on,
85. But We are nearer unto him than you, but you see not,
86. Then why do you not, if you are exempt from the reckoning and recompense
87. Bring back the soul if you are truthful?

The last moments of life preoccupies man with serious thoughts, when nothing may be done to bring the person back to normal life conditions, when the people surrounding the dying person desperately look at them and see that they are dying like a burnt out candle bidding farewell to life and no one may do anything to restore their life.

Human weakness is reflected in such moments. Despite modern sophisticated technical and medical equipment, such weakness is evident like former times. To draw a conclusion out of the preceding discussions on Resurrection and providing replies to liars and deniers, the Holy Qur'an provides a telling depiction of the last moments, saying:

"Then why do you not intervene when the soul of a dying person reaches the throat? And you at the moment are looking on".

The people surrounding the dying person are herein addressed. While looking at the dying person, they see that they cannot do anything, but notice that life and death are dependent upon Divine Will and they know that the same fate is in store for all of them.

The blessed Verse 85 is saying that We are nearest unto him than you and Our angels, prepared to take his life, are also nearest unto him then you, but you fail to see;

(***"But We are nearer unto him than you, but you see not"***).

We are fully aware of what is happening in the soul and the perturbed depth of his being as We have decreed that his life be taken at an appointed time, but you see him outwardly unaware of the manner of his departure for the other world and the violent tempests of that time. Thus, the blessed Verse reflects that God Almighty is Nearer unto the dying person.

Nonetheless, some Qur'an exegetes maintain that the blessed Verse may reflect that the angels responsible for taking the life of the dying person are here being intended. However, the former exegesis is further consistent with the literal meaning of the blessed Verse. It is worthy of note that God Almighty is Nearest unto us than anyone else, not only at the time of dying, but at all times.

He is even Nearer unto us then ourselves, but we are far from Him owing to our ignorance. Above all, the point in question is quite manifest at the time of dying. It goes without saying that being near to God Almighty or being far away from Him is spiritual rather than spatial or temporal. It is like nearness to or remoteness from the Friends of God Almighty in common usage of the term.

However, nearness unto God Almighty entails a more sublime significance solely intelligible to

"those deeply rooted in knowledge"

(rasikhun fi al-'ilm), namely the Ahl al-Bayt.[17]

The blessed Verses 86 and 87 further emphasize and expound the same truth by saying that if you shall never be recompensed for your deeds, then bring him back if you are truthful. Your failure to carry out the same reflects that you have no authority over life and death, but it is God Almighty Who rewards and chastises you for your deeds and He is the One who causes death and gives life.

It is worthy of note that the Arabic word madinin is the oblique plural form of madin which is cognate with dayn ("recompense").

In short, the blessed Verses in question are addressed to deniers of Divine Origin and Resurrection warning them that you imagine that you may do anything, but when the soul of the dying person is at his throat, you notice that you may not do anything to bring him back to life.

Then We are Nearer to him than you, but you do not comprehend the manner by which We take his soul, whereas you have not authority over warding off death and keeping your beloved alive.

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 88-89

فَأَمَّا إِن كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ

فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّةُ نَعِيمٍ

88. Then, if he [***the dying person***] ***be of those brought near unto Allah,***
89. [***There is for him***] ***rest and Mercy and a Garden abounding in Blessings.***

The blessed Verses 88 and 89 sum up the points discussed in the preceding blessed Verses, thus depicting the differences between human dispositions at the time of death reflecting that some people pass away with utmost serenity, peace of mind, and happiness, whereas some others depart the mundane world with anxiety and horror when they see Hellfire from afar.

The blessed Verses are saying that if the dying person happens to be one of those nearest unto Divine Threshold, he shall leave this world with utmost peace and serenity since they know that they shall abide in Paradise which abounds in Divine Blessings. According to lexicologists, the Arabic word rawh originally designates breathing.

The word rayhan denotes sweet scented plant or something else. However, the word connotes the cause of life and peace and in this context the world is applied to Blessings. Thus, the words rawh and rayhan connote all Blessings and the means of human comfort and peace.

In other words, it may be said that the former alludes to all the things which rescues man from hardships such that he may feel peace and comfort. In contrast to the former, the latter refers to the Blessings granted to man following hardships and vicissitudes. Muslim exegetes present different meanings for the twain terms, but since the number of such interpretations amounts to ten, they are not mentioned for the sake of brevity.

However, they are all applications of the general and comprehensive meanings mentioned under the

exegesis of the blessed Verse in question.

It is also worthy of note that following making reference to rawh and rayhan, mention is made of janna na'im ("Paradise abounding in Blessings") which may reflect that rawh and rayhan shall be bestowed upon the believers at the time of death, in the grave, in purgatory, and in Paradise.

Regarding the blessed Verse in question, a tradition is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) according to which if the dying person happens to be one of those nearest unto Divine Threshold, rawh and rayhan shall be bestowed upon him in the grave and Paradise abounding in Blessings, namely in the Hereafter.[18]

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 90-91

وَأَمَّا إِن كَانَ مِنَ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ

فَسَلَامٌ لَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ

90. And if he [***the dying person***] ***be of those on the Right Hand,***
91. Then, it shall said unto him: "Peace be unto you from your friends who are from those on the Right Hand."

The twain blessed Verses in discussion is saying that if he happens to be from the second group, those on the Right Hand, namely righteous good doing men and women whose records of deeds shall be given unto their right hands, symbolizing their victory and being admitted unto their everlasting abode, thus they shall be addressed:

"Peace unto you from your friends who are from those on the Right Hand."

Thus, the angels responsible for taking lives, convey the message of peace unto them from their friends.

The same idea is reflected in the blessed Verse 26 of the same Chapter:

"But only the saying of peace, peace!"

The blessed Verse may as well reflect the saying of peace by angels:

"Peace unto you! O you who are from those on the Right Hand!"

In other words, they are saying that you are so honorable as you are one of those on the Right Hand.

In short, the expression of

"peace"

uttered by angels or those on the Right Hand reflects rawh and rayhan and any kind of peace, serenity, and Blessing.

However, some Qur'anic exegetes maintain that the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse is:

"O you who are from those on the Right Hand! Peace unto you since you are saved from Divine torment."[19]

Surah al-Waqi'a - Verses 92-96

وَأَمَّا إِن كَانَ مِنَ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ الضَّالِّينَ

فَنُزُلٌ مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ

وَتَصْلِيَةُ جَحِيمٍ

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ حَقُّ الْيَقِينِ

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ

92. But if he be of the erring deniers,
93. Then for him is an entertainment with boiling water in Hell.
94. Then, it shall be his fate to enter Hellfire.
95. Indeed, this is an absolute Truth with certainty.
96. Therefore, glorify with praises the Name of your Lord, the Most Great.

In the first three blessed Verses in question, mention is made of the third group, aforementioned as ashab shamal:

(***"those on the Left Hand"***),

saying:

"If he happens to be of the erring deniers, then for him is an entertainment with boiling water and venomous winds. Then it shall be his fate to enter Hellfire."

In other words, they taste Divine torments at the threshold of death. They experience the bitter taste of the chastisements of Resurrection in the graves and purgatory. Since the blessed Verses treat of the disposition of the dying person, the phrase:

"an entertainment with boiling water"

(nuzulu min hamim) refers to torments in Hell, whereas:

"it shall be his fate to enter Hellfire"

(tasliyatu jahim) alludes to torments on the Day of Resurrection. The same significance is also attested in numerous traditions narrated from the Ahl al-Bayt (as).[20]

It is also worthy of note that

"the erring deniers"

(mukadhdhibin al-dhalin) are mentioned together; "the erring" refers to those who have deviated from the Straight Path, whereas "the deniers" alludes to denying Resurrection, Divine Unity, and the Prophethood of the Noble Prophet (S).

Such emphatic expression may also reflect that those in error may include the oppressed, and the defaulters who entertain neither enmity nor obduracy against the Truth and Divine Favors may be bestowed upon them.[21] In contrast, obdurate deniers shall have the aforesaid fate. It is also worthy of note that the Arabic word hamim connotes boiling water or hot and venomous winds and the word tasliya denotes burning and entering fire.

The blessed Verses 95 and 96 are saying:

"Indeed, this is an absolute Truth with certainty. Therefore, glorify with praises the Name of your Lord, the Most Great."

Qur'an exegetes maintain that truth of certainty ("haqq al-yaqin") is appositive genitive, connoting that what was said about the three groups, those nearest unto Divine Threshold, those on the Right Hand, and the deniers is absolute truth and one of certainty.

It is also possible that since there are degrees as to certainty, the most sublime of which is truth of certainty, namely the true, perfect and undoubted certainty.

It is also noteworthy that the demonstrative pronoun:

"this"

(hadha) herein makes a reference to the states of the three aforementioned groups. Some Qur'an

exegetes also maintain that the antecedent of the demonstrative pronoun is the entirety of the contents of the blessed Chapter in question or that of the Holy Qur'an. However, the former interpretation sounds more consistent with the meaning of the blessed Verse in question.

Another noteworthy point is that the verbal form fasabbih

(***"then glorify"***)

with the ramification (tafri') particle fa' alludes to the truth that what was said above regarding the three groups is absolute justice.

Thus, man is required to glorify his Lord of any injustice. It may also connote that if man intends to avoid the fate of the third group, he is supposed to glorify God Almighty of associating any partners with Him or ascribing injustice to Him which entails denial of Resurrection.

Finally, in their exegesis on the last blessed Verse, many Qur'an exegetes maintain that following the Revelation of the blessed Verse, the Noble Prophet (S) said:

"Recite it in your genuflexions [in your prayers],"

namely say

"Praise be unto God, the Greatest, and to His Praise."

When the blessed Verse 'Glorify with praises the Name of your Lord, the Most Great' he said:

*"Recite it in your prostrations [in your prayers] and say: 'Praise be unto my Lord, the Most Sublime.'"*22

O Lord, place us amongst those nearest to Your Threshold, those on the Right Hand, and Your close friends. Bestow upon us Your Rawh and Rayhan and Your Paradise abounding in Blessings. Amen! O Lord of the Worlds!

1. Lisan al-'Arab.
2. Raghib'sMufradat; Lisan al-'Arab; Ruh al-Ma'ani.
3. 36:78-79
4. Awalin Kitab-i Danishgah, vol. 1, the discussion on embryology.
5. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan; Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani.
6. Abu al-Futuh Razi's Tafsir.
7. Tafsir Maraghi; Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani.
8. Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani; Tafsir Qurtubi.
9. Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani, under the blessed Verse in question.
10. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan; Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn; Durr al-Manthur; Man la Yahdhuruhu al-Faqih.
11. 2:2
12. Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 1, p. 269).
13. Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 1, p. 270; Tafsir Burhan; Tafsir Safi; Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan, under the blessed Verse in question; Tafsir Makhzan al-'Irfan, etc.

14. Tafsir Durr al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 162.
15. Tafsir Durr al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 162.
16. Tafsir Nur, vol. 11, p. 546; Tafsir Makhzan al-'Irfan; Tafsir Nimuna, under the blessed Verse in question.
17. Tafsir Nur, vol. 11, p. 5; Tafsir al-Furqan; Tafsir Nimuna, under the blessed Verse in question.
18. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 228; Tafsir Nur, vol. 11, p. 547; Tafsir Makhzan al-'Irfan; Tafsir Nimuna, under the blessed Verse in question.
19. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan.
20. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn.
21. Tafsir Nur, vol. 11, p. 547; Tafsir Makhzan al-'Irfan; Tafsir Nimuna, under the blessed Verse in question.
22. Abu al-Futuh Razi's Tafsir; Ruh al-Ma'ani, Qurtubi's Ruh al-Bayan; Durr al-Manthur; Maraghi's Tafsir; Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan; Tafsir Minhaj al-Sadiqin; under the blessed Verse in question.

Surah al-Hadid, Chapter 57, Verses 1 - 15

(Iron)
Section (juz' 27)
Number of Verses: 29

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The Chapter, revealed in Medina, has twenty-nine Verses. Besides placing the doctrine on a firm basis, the Chapter in question treats of certain injunctions in the domains of society and government.

The opening Verses present twenty Divine Attributes. Then, the Chapter proceeds with the grandeur of the Holy Qur'an, the states of believers and hypocrites on the Day of Resurrection, accounts of former nations, spending in the Cause of Allah for the establishment of social justice, critique of monasticism, and social seclusion.

Imam Sajjad (as) said:

"God Almighty knows that a group well-known for the profundity of their thoughts shall appear in the last days of the world; as a consequence of which, He sent down Surah al-Tawhid (or Ikhlas, Chapter 112) and some of the Verses of Surah al-Hadid such that people may gain a better knowledge of God Almighty and be aware that whoever acknowledges other Divine Attributes shall be perished."[1]

The Merit of Reciting the Chapter

Interesting merits are mentioned in Islamic traditions concerning the recitation of the Chapter. It is worthy of note, however, that recitation must be accompanied by reflection and practice.

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) that:

"He who recites Surah al-Hadid shall be regarded among those who believed in Allah and His Messenger (S)."[2]

According to a tradition narrated from Imam Baqir (as):

"He who recites the Chapters opening with praises of God (musabbahat), Hadid (57), Hashr (59), Saff (61), Jum'a (62), and Taghabun (64), shall not die until he meets Imam Mahdi (may God Almighty hasten his arrival), but if he dies before Mahdi's arrival, he shall be the neighbor of Allah's Messenger (S)."[3]

For the sake of brevity, other traditions in this vein have not been mentioned.

Surah al-Hadid - Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

1. Whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah and He is the Glorious, All-Wise.
2. His is the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. It is He Who gives life and causes death and He is Able to do all things.
3. He is the First and the Last, the Manifest, and the Unmanifest. And He is the Omniscient.

In Divine world view, all the world of existence glorifies God Almighty, even if we do not perceive it. God Almighty is glorified of any defect and weakness all the world of creation bears witness to it.

It is worthy of note that the Chapter opens with an enumeration of approximately twenty Divine Attributes that increase human knowledge and reflect His Majesty and Beauty.

The more thinkers reflect upon these Attributes, the more they perceive novel truths. In this vein, it is narrated from Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (as) that being asked about Divine Unity, he replied:

"God Almighty know that certain peoples would come in the last days of the world who reflect profoundly upon issues; as a consequence of which He sent down Chapter 112 (Ikhlas) and Verses one to six of Surah al-Hadid. Whoever seeks beyond that shall perish."[4]

The tradition reflects that these blessed Verses lead seekers to the attainment of utmost possible knowledge.

The first blessed Verse of the Chapter in question opens with glorification of God Almighty;

"Whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah and He is the Glorious, All-Wise."

The preceding Chapter came to its end with glorification of God Almighty and this Chapter opens with the same. The three instances of glorification are expressed through the Arabic past verbal form sabbaha (in Chapters 57, 59, 61 and in two instances in Chapters 62 and 64, the present verbal form yusabbih is employed). The different forms of expression may reflect that the creatures of this world have always glorified His Most Sacred Essence.

True glorification designates negation of any defect and deficiency and bearing witness by all the creatures of the world reflects that the Purity of His Most Sacred Essence is free from any defect and deficiency since the world of creation follows such order and wisdom and it abounds in such wonders that they all glorify God Almighty and praise their Lord Whose Omnipotence and Wisdom are boundless.

Thus, the blessed Verse ends with:

"He is the Glorious, All-Wise."

The blessed Verse may also reflect that all the atoms of the world of creation possess some kind of perception such that they praise and glorify God Almighty in their own spheres despite that fact that owing to our limited knowledge, we are unaware of their states.

It is also worthy of note that

"whatsoever"

(ma) in

"Whatsoever is in the heavens"

(sabbaha li-lah ma fi 'l-samawat) covers a broad semantic range including all the creatures of the world inclusive of those having intellect, animate, and inanimate beings.

Following an enumeration of two Divine Attributes, All-Glorious and All-Wise, in the first blessed Verse, the second blessed Verse treats of His Possession and Sovereignty in the world of existence as the pre-requisites of Omnipotence and Wisdom, saying:

"His is the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. It is He Who gives life and causes death and He is Able to do all things. Divine Possession of the world of existence is true and formative rather than statutory or hypostasized."

In other words, His Omnipotence and Wisdom encompasses everything and all the world of existence is dependent upon His Might, Will, and Command. It is in this vein that the blessed Verse treats of giving life and causing death and Divine Omnipotence.

Thus, so far mention is made of six Divine Attributes in these two blessed Verses. Giving life and causing death is reflected in numerous Qur'anic Verses. These two issues are secrets, namely no one but God Almighty is truly aware of life and death, but we are solely aware of the tokens. It is however a source of surprise life and death are nearest to us but the truth and secrets of the same of the most unraveled issues.

It is worthy of note that the Arabic present verbal forms yuhyi wa yumit

(***"gives life and causes death"***)

reflect continuity of life and death at all times and the twain encompass all forms of life and death ranging from the world of angels to other animate beings like animals and plants not only in this mundane life but also the forms of life in purgatory and the Day of Resurrection. Life and death in all forms are dependent upon Divine Omnipotence.

The blessed Verse three deals with five more Attributes saying:

"He is the First and the Last, the Manifest, and the Unmanifest. And He is the Omniscient."

The Divine Attributes

"the First"

and

"the Last"

are delicate expressions reflecting His Pre-Eternality and Everlastingness, since we know that His Being is Infinite and He is the Necessary Being, namely His Existence lies within His Essence rather than

without as a consequence of which He has neither origin nor end but He is Pre-Eternal and Everlasting.

God Almighty is the Origin of the world of existence and He shall exist following the annihilation of the world. Thus, the expressions do not reflect the beginning and the end of some specific time span.

The expressions

"the Manifest"

and the

"Unmanifest"

also reflect His existential encompassing of all things. He is more Manifest than anything, since His tokens have encompassed everywhere. At the same time, He is more Unmanifest than anything, since profundity of His Essence is unknown to others.

It is noteworthy that one of the consequences of the aforesaid Attributes is that "He is Omniscient," since the Pre-Eternal and Everlasting Being, Manifest and Unmanifest in the world, is undoubtedly All-Aware of all things.

The traditions narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) and the Pure Imams (as) in this vein reflect interesting points elucidating these meaningful Verses.

According to a tradition narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) included in Muslim's Sahih:

"O Lord! You are the First unpreceded by anything and the Last followed by nothing. You are so Manifest and All-Conquering that no one is superior to you. You are so Unmanifest that nothing is imaginable beyond you."[5]

It is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as):

"There is no beginning for His Pre-Eternality and there is no end to His Everlastingness. He is the First Who has always been. He is Everlasting superseded by no being. He is so Manifest that His Origin is unknown and He is so Unmanifest that His location is unbeknownst."[6]

Imam Hasan Mujtaba (as) said in a sermon:

"Praise be to God Almighty Who is Pre-Eternal and Everlasting. His Attributes defy intellect, thought, and wisdom. No one may ever say anything about His Pre-Eternality, Manifestation, and Unmanifestation."[7]

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 4

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلِجُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ فِيهَا وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

4. He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days** [**and period of time**] **and then rose over the Throne. He is All-Aware of what goes into the earth and what comes forth from it and what descends from the heaven and what ascends thereto. And He is with you wherever you may be. And Allah is the All-Seer of what you do.

Preceded by an enumeration of eleven Divine Attributes of Divine Pure Essence, the blessed Verse 4 treats of five other Attributes, the first of which is Divine Creativity.

The blessed Verse in question is saying that He is the One Who created the heavens and the earth in six days:

(***"He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days** [**and period of time**] **and then rose over the Throne. He is All-Aware of what goes into the earth and what comes forth from it and what descends from the heaven and what ascends thereto. And He is with you wherever you may be. And Allah is the All-Seer of what you do"***).

"Creation in six days"

is attested seven times in the Glorious Qur'an the first and the last of which are mentioned in 7:54 and 57:4.

As mentioned above, the word

"day"

(yawm) in the blessed Verses in question do not denote a normal day but it connotes "period of time" be it brief or long.

It may even last millions of years. Such expression is to be found in the Arabic as well as other languages. For instance, it is said that today, it is the turn of such and such group to rule and tomorrow it will be the turn of others. The connotation of "periods" in this context was elaborated upon in details under 7:54.

It is worthy of note that God Almighty could create the whole world in one single moment, but creating in that manner could not reflect Divine Glory, Omnipotence, and Omniscience, but creating the world within a period of billions of years in different periods and forms based on an order and measure may reflect

further manifest tokens of His Omniscience and Wisdom.

Furthermore, such creation in time serves as a model for the gradual development of mankind and lack of haste in attaining to different goals. The blessed Verse proceeds with world Sovereignty, saying that following the creation of the world, God Almighty rose over the Throne and took the reign of the Sovereignty of the world.

God Almighty has undoubtedly no body nor the word

"Throne"

mentioned herein denotes the royal throne, but this expression delicately reflects Divine Absolute Sovereignty and His All-Encompassing Omnipotence over the world of existence.

The Arabic word ‘arsh denotes something with a roof over it or the roof itself. It is also employed to denote the royal throne, but it also connotes might, as it is said in the Persian tongue: "The feet of his throne collapsed," which connotes that he lost his power.

It is noteworthy that contrary to what some ignorant people imagine that God created the world and abandoned it, He is the Sovereign and the Ruler of the world and the dependence of the systematicity of the world on His Pure Essence is such that if He deceases His emanation and Grace for one single moment, everything will collapse.

Taking such truth into account bestows such perception and insight upon man that he may see, feel, and love God Almighty everywhere and in everything including his own heart.

The blessed Verse proceeds to treat of another aspect of Divine Omniscience saying that He is All-Aware of what penetrates into the earth and what comes out of it and also what descends from the heaven and what ascends to heaven;

(***"He is All-Aware of what goes into the earth and what comes forth from it and what descends from the heaven and what ascends thereto. And He is with you wherever you may be. And Allah is the All-Seer of what you do"***).

Although all these points are encompassed in

"And He is All-Aware of all things"

mentioned in the preceding Verses, but an exposition of such meanings makes man attend further to Divine Omniscience. He is All-Aware of what penetrates into the earth, like rains drops and torrents. He is All-Aware of the seeds of plants disseminated on the earth by wind or insects penetrating into it.

He is All-Aware of the roots of trees penetrating into the depth of the earth in search of nutrients. He is All-Aware of all the mines and treasures which were on the face of the earth but they were interred

thereafter.

He is All-Aware of treasures, corpses, insects making their subterranean nests, plants growing from the ground, fountains springing from the heart of rocks and soil, manifesting mines and treasures, humankind growing on it, volcanoes erupting from the heart of the earth, insects growing in their nests, gases emitting from the earth, gravitation waves arising from it, what descends from the heaven, ranging from rain drops to the life giving rays of the sun to the host of angels to the powerful waves of Revelation and Divine Scriptures, from cosmic rays to meteors and shooting stars absorbed by the earth.

He is All-Aware of what ascends to the heaven like angels, human souls, servants' deeds, invocations and devotions, different kinds of birds, vapors, and clouds. What is known and unknown to us are all manifest through His Omniscience.

If we reflect upon the facts that billions of different beings penetrate into the earth and billions of beings descend from the sky or ascend to it within one single moment and no one but God Almighty is aware of their numbers, we may be further acquainted with His Omniscience.

The fourth and the fifth Attributes emphasize that

"He is with you where ever you happen to be and as such, He is All-Aware of what you do. How could He be not with us when we depend on Him and His Grace for all the moments of our existence? He is the Spirit of the world of existence.

He is the Spirit of the world. He is superior to all. He was with us when we were scattered dust, when we were embryos in our mothers' wombs. He has been with us at all times. He will be with us in purgatory. How could He be unaware of us?"

Knowing that He is with us bestows majesty and grandeur to us on the one side and grants security and self confidence on the other. Such knowledge engenders bravery and boldness into man and also endows man with great obligations, since He is Omnipresent and watches over every being.

It is the greatest lesson of education, since it is the main root of fear of God, purity, and honest. The secret of His Majesty and Grandeur is that He is Omnipresent. It is not metaphorical and figurative, but such truth is both pleasant and satisfying on the one hand and entailing obligations and inspiring awe on the other.

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

"The most sublime degree of faith is that man be aware of Divine Omnipresence."[8]

According to another Prophetic tradition, Moses (as) inquired:

"Where may I find you, O Lord?"

Thus he was addressed:

"Whenever you will, you reach me."[9]

Such Divine Accompaniment of servants is so precise and delicate that any believing thinker may be aware of its profundity within the capacity of his faith and thought.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 5

لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الأمُورُ

5. His is the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and to Allah return all things.

Divine Sovereignty encompasses the heavens with such majesty and whatever is included in them like celestial bodies, and the vast earth and what is on it like mountains, oceans, animals of the land and seas and jinn and mankind visible or invisible whose existence depends on Divine Will.

All creatures return to Him Who is the Origin, the Point of Return, and the Agent and the Final Causes. God Almighty is the Creator of the world of existence and the Sovereign of all existential things. The world of existence shall return to Him.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 6

يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَهُوَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ

6. He merges night into day and merges day into night and He has full knowledge of the secrets and intentions in the hearts.

The procession, wane, and wax of days and nights reflect Divine Sovereignty.

The blessed Verse in question makes mention of two more Divine Attributes, saying:

"He merges night into day and merges day into night."

He decreases a certain amount of time from one and adds it to the other thereby altering the length of day and time, namely the alteration affected by the four seasons of the year entailing all the blessings for mankind.

The blessed Verse proceeds to say that;

"He has full knowledge of the secrets and intentions in the hearts."

The Arabic word dhat denotes "having" herein connoting the intentions and beliefs controlling and ruling the hearts.

It is worthy of note that the preceding Verses reflect that God Almighty is All–Aware of our deeds;

(***"And Allah is the All-Seer of what you do"***)

and the blessed Verse in question designates that He is fully Aware of our intentions, beliefs, and thoughts;

(***"He has full knowledge of the secrets and intentions in the hearts"***).

Bura' ibn 'Azib narrates from the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali (as):

"I inquired:

'O Commander of the Faithful! I ask you to inform me, for the sake of God Almighty and His Messenger (S), of the best thing which the Noble Prophet (S) bestowed upon you that was revealed to you by God Almighty through Gabriel.'

He replied:

'Whenever you intend to call God Almighty by His Greatest Attribute, recite the first six blessed Verses of Surah al-Hadid and the last four blessed Verses of Surah al-Hashr. Then, raise your hands and say:

'O God! Such are You. I invoke you to pay homage to Muhammad and answer my prayer.'

Then, say what you need. By God Almighty, besides Whom there is no other object of worship, your prayer will be answered, if God wills.'" 10

The tradition reflects the majesty of the blessed Verses and the significance of their contents. However, it must be borne in mind that the Divine Greatest Attribute is not just the form but it requires assuming Divine Attributes.

Surah al-Hadid – Verse 7

آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَأَنفِقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُم مُّسْتَخْلَفِينَ فِيهِ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَأَنفَقُوا لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ

7. Believe in Allah and His Messenger and expend of that whereof He has made you trustees. And such of you who believe and expend in Allah's Cause, theirs shall be a great reward.

The blessed Verse addresses believers saying that the injunction as to believe in Allah and His Messenger (S) requires acting upon belief. Thos who claim to be believers should expend in Allah's

Cause to substantiate their claims.

Being trustees in:

"He has made you trustees"

indicates that man is Allah's vicegerent on the earth as it is reflected elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[11]:

"Verily I appointed [***man***] ***as the vicegerent."***

Thus, the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse is:

"O believers! You are Allah's vicegerents on the earth and expend in Allah's Cause what you possess which is Allah's Possession vested with you."

It may also reflect that you people are the successors of your predecessors and your possessions used to be theirs. Thus, expend such possessions in Allah's Cause as they will be inherited by your heirs.[12] It is worthy of note that belief is valuable when it is accompanied by bearing assistance to the needy and such expending is valuable when it arises from belief in God Almighty.

Man must be aware of the fact that whatever he possesses is trusted with him and the true possessor is Allah. Although belief and expending in Allah's Cause are obligations but they will be rewarded by God Almighty.

The reward is the key to encouraging man to act;

(***"And such of you who believe and expend in Allah's Cause, theirs shall be a great reward"***).

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 8

وَمَا لَكُمْ لاَ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ وَقَدْ أَخَذَ مِيثَاقَكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ

8. And what is the matter with you that you believe not in Allah! While the Messenger invites you to believe in your Lord and He has indeed taken your covenant through intellect, natural innate disposition, and the Prophets, if you truly believe.

Following a reference to having faith and expending in Allah's Cause, the blessed Verse further treats of the same in the form of an argument.

First, disbelievers are reproached for not having believed in the Noble Prophet's (S) Prophetic call by asking:

"What is the matter with you that you believe not in Allah! While the Messenger invites you to

believe in your Lord and He has indeed taken your covenant through intellect, natural innate disposition, and the Prophets, if you truly believe."

If you truly believe in Truth, the arguments thereof are crystal clear as such belief is substantiated by intellect, innate natural disposition, and narration. On the one hand, Allah's Messenger (S) called you with clear proofs, sings, and manifest miracles and on the other hand, God Almighty has taken your covenant by reflecting His tokens in the world of creation and your inward being.

Such covenant is formative. Believe in Him. But, you are indifferent toward intellect, the innate natural disposition, and Revelation. You fail to be prepared to believe since you are overwhelmed by ignorance, bias, and blind imitation.

The above reflects that:

"if you truly believe"

indicates that if you are prepared to believe in God Almighty and His Messenger, you must acknowledge the manifest arguments thereof. The point is that disbelievers saw the Noble Prophet (S), listened to his Prophetic call and witnessed his miracles, how could they produce any pretext?

In this vein, it is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) that he asked his companions:

"Whose belief is more wondrous?"

They replied:

"Angels."

Allah's Messenger (S) said:

"It is not a wonder that they believe, since they are near unto Divine Threshold."

They said:

"The Prophets'."

He asked:

"How may they fail to believe when they received Divine Revelation?"

They said:

"Ours."

He said:

"It is not a wonder if you believe since I am among you."

The companions were silent.

The Noble Prophet (S) said:

*"The most wondrous belief belongs to those who follow you and merely see some pages before them, but they believe in it, namely the Holy Qur'an."*13

It is a fact that people who see the light a long time after the Noble Prophet's (S) demise and are solely informed of Prophetic traditions, but they acknowledge the Prophetic call and thereby are accorded great privileges. The term covenant (mithaq) may be a reference to the innate natural disposition toward Divine Unity reflected through intellectual arguments and witnessing the system of creation.

The phrase:

"in your Lord"

(bi-rabbikum) reflects Divine organicism in the world of creation. Some Qur'an exegetes maintain that "covenant" herein reflects that taken in the world of pre-existence ('alam al-dharr). God Almighty knows better.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 9

هُوَ الَّذِي يُنَزِّلُ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُمْ لَرَؤُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

9. It is He Who sends down clear and elucidating Verses to His servant that He may bring you out from shadows into light. And indeed, Allah is to you full of kindness, Most Gracious.

Sincere devotion paves the ground for the bestowal of Divine Favors. The Prophets mainly aimed to deliver mankind from the shadows of ignorance, polytheism, and discord and lead them to the path of Divine Light; all paths besides it lead to shadows.

Thus, the blessed Verse in question encourages man to believe in God Who send down the blessed Verses unto His servant, Muhammad (S). Divinely revealed Verses clearly reflect their Divine Origin of Truth and they bear witness to His obedient servant's sincerity such that mankind may perceive Divine Argument and find no truth in pretexts.

God Almighty appointed the Prophets and revealed Scriptures out of His Bounty and Mercy such that mankind may be delivered from the darkness of ignorance and corruption and find the path toward the light of knowledge and appropriate manners and ethical principles. Thus, they may be reminded of their convent taken by their Lord on the pre-eternal day.

It is noteworthy that:

"Allah is to you full of kindness, Most Gracious"

delicately reflects the truth that such Divine emphatic and passionate call to having faith and expending in Allah's Cause manifests Divine Mercy encompassing all in this world and the Hereafter.

Some Qur'an exegetes draw a distinction between Kindness and Graciousness saying that the former and the latter represent His Mercy toward the obedient and the disobedient respectively.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 10

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لاَ يَسْتَوِي مِنكُم مَّنْ أَنفَقَ مِن قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَاتَلَ أُوْلَئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أَنفَقُوا مِن بَعْدُ وَقَاتَلُوا وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَى وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

10. And what is the matter with you that you expend not in the Cause of Allah** [**whereas you leave whatever you possess and pass away**]**? And to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth. Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the conquest** [**of Mecca**]**. Such are higher in degree than those who spent and fought afterwards. But to all Allah has promised the best** [**to both of them**]**. And Allah is All-Aware of what you do.

The blessed Verse in question criticizes those who fail to expend in Allah's cause despite the fact that they know that their possessions have been temporarily given to them by God Almighty Who is the True Possessor and whatever has been given to them will be inherited by their successors. God Almighty is the True Possessor of all possessions and whatever exists in the heavens and on the earth, namely they all reflect His Bounties and Graciousness and they shall all return to Him.

After encouraging believers to expend in Allah's Cause, the blessed Verse promises Divine Rewards to such expenders, saying that those who had expended in Allah's Cause before the conquest of Mecca and had waged wars with disbelievers and their concupiscent soul are not on a par with those who did likewise following the conquests and the dissemination of the Islamic faith.

The disparity is manifest since Muslims were few in number in the advent of the Noble Prophet's (S) call and Islam was not that strong against the great number of disbelievers. Thus, expending in Allah's Cause and participation in jihad entailed further significance and Divine Rewards compared to such acts carried out by later believers.

Both of them receive Divine Rewards, though there is a great difference between them in terms of degrees. Since the value of deeds lies in sincere devotion, the blessed Verse in question ends by saying that God Almighty is fully Aware of what you do in terms of quantity and quality as well as intention and sincerity.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 11

مَن ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ وَلَهُ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ

11. Who is he that will lend Allah a goodly loan? Then Allah will increase it manifold to his credit and he will have a good reward.

In order to encourage believers to expend in Allah's Cause, the blessed Verse makes use of another interesting expression saying:

"Who is he that will lend Allah a goodly loan? Then Allah will increase it manifold to his credit and he will have a good reward."

It is a surprising expression since God Almighty Who bestows all Bounties and all the atoms of our being are emanated every single moment from His boundless ocean of Emanation and they are all possessed by Him regards us as the owners of possessions and asks us to give Him a goodly loan such that He will increase it manifold, hundreds or even thousands times more.

Furthermore, such great rewards may not be bestowed by others besides Him. The Arabic word qardh denotes cutting and portioning a part of possession. miqradh denotes scissors and qiradha is applied to apportioned possession. Giving loans to God Almighty shall be increased manifold on the Day of Resurrection.

The word is accompanied by hasan:

(***"goodly"***)

connoting that it shall be reimbursed immediately without any trouble.

The blessings arising from such goodly loans include decrease in enmity and increase in love, safeguarding people's prestige and impeding their bankruptcy, betterment of the economic structure of society, impeding the prevalence of usury, checking avarice and miserliness, just distribution of wealth, and growth in the culture of cooperation.

According to a tradition narrated from Imam Kadim (as), the blessed Verse in question reflects contributions made to the Lord of the Age [namely, the Twelfth Imam (as)].[14]

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 12

يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَسْعَى نُورُهُم بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِم بُشْرَاكُمُ الْيَوْمَ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

12. On the Day you shall see the believing men and the believing women: their light running forward before them and by their right hands. [***It is said unto them:***] ***Glad tidings for you this Day! Gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein forever! Verily, this is the great success.***

The light of faith leads believers to Paradise on the Day of Resurrection.

Thus, the blessed Verse is saying:

"O Muhammad! Remember the Day when you see believing men and women whose light forwards before them and on their right hand side bearing them the glad tidings of being admitted to Paradise. Such light surrounding believers is that of faith, monotheism, and righteous good deeds. It is the spiritual light of belief and certitude in Divine Origin and Resurrection shedding light before them and that of righteous good deeds on their right hand side.

In the same manner that faith serves as man's guide to happiness and spiritual and ethical virtues, it will shed light when the world will be plunged into shadows. Such light, emanated inwardly, is the light of monotheism and certitude possessed by those near unto Divine Threshold. They are the people on the right. The intensity of the light depends upon faith, righteous good deeds, certitude, and fear of God Almighty."

It is also reflected in traditions that the light of the good differs in terms of luminescence, namely, any God fearing believer will shed light before him and on his right depending the degree of his faith.

Thus, believers will be led to Paradise, the abode of Divine Grace, to dwell therein everlastingly. Angels of Mercy shall welcome them bearing them glad tidings of gardens under whose trees and arbors rivers of Divine Infinite Emanation and Bounties flow.

The best tidings for the people of Paradise are that they shall dwell therein forever.

"This is the great success"

reflects Divine Favors in store for the people of Paradise. Such happiness and merit shall be bestowed upon believers.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 13

يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا انظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِن نُّورِكُمْ قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا وَرَاءكُمْ فَالْتَمِسُوا نُورًا فَضُرِبَ بَيْنَهُم بِسُورٍ لَّهُ بَابٌ بَاطِنُهُ فِيهِ الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرُهُ مِن قِبَلِهِ الْعَذَابُ

13. On the Day when the hypocrites – men and women – will say to the believers: "Glance at us! Let us get something from your light!" It will be said: "Go back to your rear! Then seek light [***from***

the world]!" Then, a wall will be put up between them, with a gate therein. Inside [namely Paradise] it will be mercy and outside it will be torment [Hell]."

Those who failed to be delivered from the shadows of ignorance, polytheism, and discord shall stay in darkness on the Day of Resurrection beseeching believers to allow them to avail themselves of their luminescence.

Thus, the blessed Verse in question is saying that on that Day, hypocrites – men and women – shall ask them to glance at them so that they may make use of their light. The Arabic word iqtibas derives from q-b-s denoting take or seek to take fire but it connotes taking other things.

"Glance at us"

(anduruna) is uttered by hypocrites plunged into shadows beseeching believers to take a glance at them such that they may make use of their light to find the path.

The clause may also connote waiting, namely

"wait for us until we may reach you and find the path through your light."

However, it is said unto them:

"God to your rear and seek light. It is no place for gaining light since you should have gained it in the world which you left by doing righteous good deeds. However, it is too late. Then, all of a sudden, a wall will be erected between the two groups in which there is a gate. The twain sides of such colossal wall or gate will be quite different – there is mercy within and torment without.

The Arabic word sur denotes the wall formerly surrounding cities and towns for security on which there were watch towers. It is worthy of note that the blessed Verse is saying that there is mercy within and torment without, namely believers like inhabitants of cities are protected within the walls but hypocrites, like strangers, will stay without.

Believers and hypocrites used to live in the same society, but there was a colossal wall between their beliefs and deeds. It shall be the same on the Day of Resurrection. The gate may be there so that hypocrites may see through it heavenly blessings and yearn or it may be there such that those with less impurities be able to pass through it and join believers.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 14

يُنَادُونَهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَى وَلَكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنتُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْأَمَانِيُّ حَتَّى جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَغَرَّكُم بِاللَّهِ الْغَرُورُ

14.** [**The hypocrites**] **will call the believers: "Were we not with you?" The believers will reply: "Yes! But you led yourselves into sedition and looked forward for our destruction; you doubted** [**the true religion**] **and were deceived by false desires, till the command of Allah came to pass** [**to cause your perdition**]**. And the chief deceiver deceived you in respect of Allah."

The Arabic verbal form fa-tantum denotes "you led yourselves into the sedition of discord. Tarabbus denotes awaiting and amani is the plural form of umniya denoting desire. gharur ("deceiving, deceiver") is one of the appellations of Satan.

The blessed Verse is saying that hypocrites will call believers asking whether they had not been living with them in the same society and they were with them there. What did happen that they were severed of a sudden and believers were admitted to Divine Mercy and Spirit and they were abandoned in torment?

Believers reply to them saying that they used to be together everywhere and at all times. They used to be neighbors or even shared the same roof, but they had been quite different in terms of beliefs and deeds. They had kept aloof from them as strangers alien to the principles of truth.

The blessed Verse further adds that they were entangled by gross mistakes, including:

1. They deceived themselves through treading the path of disbelief and caused their own perdition.

2. They always looked forward for the Noble Prophet's (S) demise and the perdition of Muslims and effacement of the basis of the Islamic faith. Besides, they procrastinated all righteous deeds and moves.

3. They always doubted Resurrection and the veracity of the Prophetic call and the Holy Qur'an.

4. They were always preoccupied with endless desires until the time when they died owing to Divine Command. Such vain desires impeded them from true reflection since they had plunged into dreams and imaginations thus living in a world of illusions. Thus, they were overwhelmed by gratification of concupiscent desires and attainment to mundane goals.

5. Furthermore, the deceiving Satan had solidified its basis in their hearts and thereby deceived you by temptations. At times, Satan made you believe that the world was everlasting and the resurrection was not to be actualized. At times, Satan questioned the existence of God Almighty. These five factors caused the severance between hypocrites and believers.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 15

فَالْيَوْمَ لاَ يُؤْخَذُ مِنكُمْ فِدْيَةٌ وَلاَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ هِيَ مَوْلاَكُمْ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ

15. Therefore, this Day no ransom shall be taken from you [hypocrites], nor of those who disbelieved. Our abode is the Fire. That is your friend [you deserve such dire fate].

The blessed Verse draws a conclusion saying that neither hypocrites nor disbelievers may not be ransomed on the Day of Resurrection and thereby be safeguarded from Divine Chastisement. Thus, disbelievers and hypocrites share the same dire fate since they are entangled by their sins and vices and they may not find any deliverance.

The blessed Verse further adds that their abode shall be fire and their friend and guardian shall be Hell. What an unfortunate abode it is. In this world, people usually resort to paying ransoms or seeking assistance from their friends and mediators to deliver themselves from chastisement. However, there shall be neither friends nor mediators to assist hypocrites and disbelievers on the Day of Resurrection since all attachments and ties shall be severed then.

Thus, the Holy Qur'an elucidates that the only means to deliverance on that Day is to have faith and do righteous good deeds. Intermediation shall be limited to those who have faith and do righteous good deeds rather than those alien thereto who have severed all their ties from God Almighty and His friends.

1. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn.
2. Majma' al-Bayan, the opening of the Chapter.
3. Majma' al-Bayan.
4. Usul al-Kafi, Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 231.
5. Tafsir Qurtubi, vol. 9, p. 6406.
6. Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 163.
7. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, vol. 5, p. 236.
8. Durr al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 171.
9. Ruh al-Bayan, vol. 9, p. 351.
10. Tafsir Durr al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 171; Tafsir Nimuna, under the blessed Verse in question.
11. 2:30
12. Tafsir al-Mizan.
13. Bukhari's Sahih; Tafsir Maraghi, Tafsir fi Thalal al-Qur'an; Tafsir Nimuna; and other exegetic works.
14. Tafsir Safi, p. 522, under the blessed Verse in question.

Surah al-Hadid, Verses 16 - 29

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 16

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَن تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلاَ يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

16. Has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe to be softened and humbled by Allah's Reminder, such that they be not amongst those upon whom the Divine Book was revealed and the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened and many of them were disobedient to Allah?

Different occasions of Revelation have been mentioned for the blessed Verse in question including the following. Once the Noble Prophet's (S) adherents lived a hard life in famine in Mecca but after their migration they attained to abundance and bounties.

Thus, the hearts of some of them were hardened whereas their faith, certitude, and devotion were supposed to be increased owing to their acquaintance with the Holy Qur'an.

Thus, the blessed Verse was revealed to serve as a warning to them.[1] It is worthy of note that all the awakening and severe warnings reflected in the preceding blessed Verses and the account of the hypocrites' and disbelievers' dire fate on the Day of Resurrection lead to the conclusion in the blessed Verse in question by saying that the hearts of believers should be humbled against remembrance of God Almighty and Divine Revelation and they should not be like those, including Jews and Christians, upon whom Divine Books were sent down, but they kept aloof from the Prophets. They lived long but failed to remember God Almighty.

Their hearts were hardened and many of them were sinners and disobedient to Divine Commands.

The Arabic verbal form takhsha'a derives from kh-sh-' denoting "observe manners against a notable person or an important truth."

It is crystal clear that when man remembers God Almighty in the bottom of his heart, listens to the blessed Verses revealed unto the Noble Prophet (S), and befittingly reflects upon the same, his heart must be softened and humbled. However, some believers are harshly criticized in the blessed Verse in question by asking why their hearts are not humbled by such things but they, like many former nations, have plunged into neglect and negligence.

Such neglect leads to the hardening of heart which in turn ends in disobedience to God Almighty. Would it be consistent with their claim to having faith to simply ignore such significant issues, be submitted to comfortable life, and being immersed in the pleasures of the flesh?

"The term was prolonged for them"

may reflect the temporal distance between them and their Prophets, long life and endless desires, Divine torment not being sent down for a long time, or all of them, since each of which may lead to neglect and hardening of heart that in turn leads to disobedience to Divine Command.

It is narrated from Imam 'Ali (as):

*"Do not hasten as to anything before its term arrives unless you will regret your haste. The distance between you and Truth should not be long as it will harden your hearts."*2

It is narrated from Jesus (as) that it is incumbent upon believers not to speak for long without remembrance of God Almighty otherwise it leads to hardening of heart and hardened hearts are remote from God Almighty.3

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 17

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

***17. Know that Allah gives life to the earth after its death! Indeed, We have made clear the Signs to you, if you but reflect** [**upon them**].*

Since giving life to dead hearts through remembrance of God Almighty and attainment to spiritual life in the light of humbleness and obedience to the Holy Qur'an to a great extent resembles the life giving rain drops rejuvenating dead lands, the blessed Verse in question says:

"Know that Allah gives life to the earth after its death."

The blessed Verse is saying that We elucidated Our Sings in the world of creation as well as Our Verses such that you may reflect upon them. The blessed Verse actually makes a reference to rain giving life to dead lands and to giving of life to dead hearts through remembrance of God Almighty and the Holy Qur'an revealed to the pure heart of Muhammad (S). Both of them deserve reflection.

Thus, reference has been made to the twain in Islamic traditions. In this vein, it is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) that the blessed Verse in question refers to giving life to the earth through propagation of justice following the effacement of injustice.4

It is narrated from Imam Baqir (as) concerning the exegesis of the blessed Verse in question that God Almighty shall give life to earth following its death by Imam Mahdi (may God Almighty hasten his arrival) and the death of the earth reflects the disbelief of its inhabitants and disbelievers are dead.5

According to a tradition narrated from Imam Musa ibn Ja'far (as):

*"God Almighty gives life to dead hearts through the light of wisdom, the same manner that He gives life to the earth by sending down blissful rains on it."*6

It goes without saying that these exegeses actually reflect the clear meanings of the blessed Verse and by no means restrict the contextual meaning of it.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 18

إِنَّ الْمُصَّدِّقِينَ وَالْمُصَّدِّقَاتِ وَأَقْرَضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُضَاعَفُ لَهُمْ وَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ

18. Indeed, those men and women who have given Allah goodly loans, their rewards shall be increased manifold, and theirs shall be an honorable good reward.

The blessed Verse in question is saying that men and women believing in God Almighty, acknowledging the Prophetic call, and expending their possessions for Allah's Satisfaction are favored by Him and great rewards shall fall into their shares.

Expending in Allah's Cause is so significant that although God Almighty is the Possessor of all things, He is so Gracious to His servants that He encourages them to expending in His Cause by saying that it is like giving Him goodly loans reflecting that in the same manner that loans will be reimbursed, expending in Allah's Cause will be returned manifold.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 19

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الصِّدِّيقُونَ وَالشُّهَدَاء عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ وَنُورُهُمْ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُوْلَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ

19. And Those who believe in Allah and His Messengers, they are the sincere believers and the witnesses with their Lord; they shall have their reward and their light. But those who disbelieve and deny Our Signs, they shall be the dwellers of the Fire.

The blessed Verse makes mention of sincere believers as those who believed in God Almighty and Prophetic calls.

The Arabic intensified form siddiq

(***"sincere"***)

denotes one acting upon sincerity and truth in all his deeds, words, and beliefs and his outward reflects his inward and his inward is absorbed in the sea of spiritual and intuitive knowledge and sincerity.

Such people live according to truth and they will be rewarded for their righteous deeds and their light is the reward of their sincere belief. Au contraire, those who denied Divine Signs and Verses and belied the Prophets shall be friends and people of Hell.

According to Tabarsi, the eminent Shi'i scholar, Harith ibn Mughayra narrates from Imam Baqir (as) who

in turned narrated traditions from the Noble Prophet (S), saying:

"Whoever of you knows the Imam of his time and awaits his authority resembles one who awaiting the rise of the riser (may Allah hastens his arrival) from the Noble Prophet's (S) descendants wages war in Allah's cause or he is likened to one martyred in the Noble Prophet's pavilion."

Then, the Imam (as) said that there is a Qur'anic Verse in this regard and upon inquiring as to which Verse, he recited:

"And Those who believe in Allah and His Messengers, they are the sincere believers and the witnesses with their Lord; they shall have their reward and their light. But those who disbelieve and deny Our Signs, they shall be the dwellers of the Fire."[7]

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 20

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَاهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ

20. Know that the worldly life is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children. [It is] the likeness of vegetation after rain, thereof the growth is pleasing to the farmer; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw. But in the Hereafter [there is] a severe torment and forgiveness from Allah and good pleasure. And the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment.

Since love for the mundane world is the origin of all sins and the springhead of all errors, the blessed Verse presents a telling depiction of the worldly life, its different stages, and the motives dominating each stage by saying:

"Know that the worldly life is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children."

The five cycles of human life consist of neglect, amusement, luxury, boasting, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children. Childhood is spent in neglect, ignorance, and amusement. Adolescence is spent in playfulness and escaping from serious issues to amusement.

Youth is spent in lust, love, and luxury. Then, man reaches the fourth stage when man is inclined toward prestige and boastfulness. Finally, the fifth stage is when man is preoccupied with gaining more possessions and having more children.

The early stages are nearly determined by advancement in years, but later stages vary in different

people and stages like gaining further possessions may occupy man to the end of his life. Some maintain, however, that each of the said stages occupies eight years of life totaling to forty years when man's character is fixed.

The blessed Verse proceeds with a similitude as to the beginning and the end of worldly life, saying:

"[It is] the likeness of vegetation after rain, thereof the growth is pleasing to the farmer; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw."

The Arabic word kuffar herein denotes farmers since the word kufr originally denotes covering and since farmers sows the seeds by covering it by soil. Nonetheless, some exegetes maintain that the word is employed herein in the sense of disbelievers, since worldly possessions may solely deceive disbelievers and inspire wonder in them.

The Arabic word hutam denotes shattering and breaking into pieces and it is also applied to the straw scattered by wind. The word ghayth denotes good rain. The verbal form yahiju is employed in two senses: withering of plants and excitement.

It is worthy of note that human stages lasting seventy years and beyond are reflected in plants within a period of several months. Man may sit by the farmland and witness in brief the transience of life.

The blessed Verse proceeds with the fruits of life saying that consequent to one's deeds, either severe torment or Divine Satisfaction may fall into man's share. Finally, the blessed Verse ends by saying that worldly life is nothing but deception. The Arabic word ghurur denotes deception and mata‘ signifies the means of using something.

Thus, the blessed Verse is saying that worldly life is the means of deception, namely it serves as the means of deceiving oneself and others. It is worthy of note that the means of deception applies to those who regard mundane life as their final goal. They attach themselves to and rely on it. they set their final goal on gaining further possessions.

However, if the bounties of the mundane world serve as the means of attaining to exalted human values and everlasting happiness, it will be like the farm of the Hereafter and a bridge which may be employed to attain to sublime goals. Attending to the world and its bounties as a passageway and temporary place of residence may lead man to two different orientations.

It may either lead to quarrels, corruption, injustice, tyranny, disobedience, and neglect or it may lead to awareness, awakening, sacrifice, brotherhood, and forgiving. In other words, what leads disbelievers to deception and chastisement may lead believers to growth, development, and Divine Forgiveness and Satisfaction.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 21

سَابِقُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أُعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

21. Race with one another in hastening toward Divine Forgiveness and Paradise whose width is as the width of the heaven and the earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers. That is the Grace of Allah which He bestows on whom He is pleased with. And Allah is the Owner of Great Bounty.

The preceding blessed Verse reflects that human deeds in this world will entail either severe torment or Divine Forgiveness and Satisfaction. The blessed Verse in question emphasizes racing in hastening toward Divine Forgiveness.

Thus, the blessed Verse says:

"Race with one another in hastening toward Divine Forgiveness and Paradise whose width is as the width of the heaven and the earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers."

Divine Forgiveness is actually the key to Paradise encompassing the heaven and the earth which is now prepared for believers.

It is noteworthy that making a reference to Divine Forgiveness prior to receiving glad tidings of being admitted to Paradise delicately reflects the truth that so long as man is not absolved of sins, he will not deserve to being admitted to Paradise and be near unto Divine Threshold.

It is also worthy of note that racing toward Divine Forgiveness may be carried out through its means, including repentance and compensation for missed obligations and basically obedience to God Almighty and refraining from committing sins.

The blessed Verse ends by saying:

"That is the Grace of Allah which He bestows on whom He is pleased with. And Allah is the Owner of Great Bounty."

Undoubtedly, such vast Paradise with its great bounties may not be attained by such insignificant deeds, but it is Divine Grace, Mercy, and Favor that such great reward is bestowed against such insignificant deeds. Man may not expect otherwise, since rewards are always consistent to the generosity of the one bestowing rewards.

Thus, the expression clearly reflects that Divine Rewards are not bestowed on the basis of insignificant deeds, but they are Divine Bounties and Favors.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 22

مَا أَصَابَ مِن مُّصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلاَ فِي أَنفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّبْرَأَهَا إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

22. No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is inscribed in the Tablet before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allah.

The world of existence is well-measured and prior to becoming existent, all phenomena have been recorded.

Thus, to lay further emphasis on refraining from mundane attachments and not being affected by worldly possession and loss, the blessed Verse says:

"No calamity befalls on the earth or in you but it is inscribed in the Preserved Tablet before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allah."

Calamities like earthquakes, floods, tempests, and different blights and also human afflictions like death, ailments, and undesirable occurrences have all been pre-ordained and recorded in the Preserved Tablet aiming to test mankind in encountering vicissitudes.

However, it is worthy of note that the calamities mentioned in the blessed Verse in question are solely inevitable ones beyond human control.

The same theme is reflected elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[8]:

"And whatever of misfortune befalls you is the consequence of what your hands have earned. And He is Oft-Forgiving."

The twain blessed Verses interpret each other reflecting that afflictions befalling man fall into two categories, the first of which include numerous chastisements and atonements of sins, e.g. injustice, treason, deviation, and neglect, constituting the consequence of our deeds.

The second category includes the inevitable afflictions beyond human control affecting individuals and societies aiming at trials. These two categories are discrete. Thus, many Prophets, friends of God Almighty, and pious believers were afflicted by such calamities for their trial or promotion of exalted states such that those who are nearer unto Divine Threshold suffer further calamities.

There is a precise philosophy for such afflictions which were mentioned above in discussions on theology, Divine Justice, and afflictions.

In this vein, it is narrated that upon Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn Zayn al-'Abidin's (as) arrival in shackles and fetters at Yazid's meeting, the latter turned to the Imam (as) and recited Verse 30 from Surah al-Shura[9]:

"And Whatever of misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He is Oft-Forgiving,"

sarcastically connoting that the afflictions of their family are the consequences of their deeds. However, the Imam (as) refuted his claim by saying that the blessed Verse had not been revealed about them, but another blessed Verse had been sent down as per which God Almighty had preordained such afflictions for them for the upkeep of the Islamic faith.[10]

It is worthy of note that afflictions befalling the unjust aim at warning them, but those befalling believers are the means of trial and growth and those befalling Allah's friends aim at promotion of their exalted states.[11]

According to another tradition:

"Afflictions of the unjust are for warning them, those befalling believers are for trial, and those befalling Allah's friends are for promotion of their states."

It is noteworthy that:

"And verily it is easy for Allah"

reflects that recording so many afflictions in the Preserved Tablet is facile for Allah. The Preserved Tablet indicates Divine Omniscience reflected in the world of creation and the system of causality governing it.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 23

لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلاَ تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ وَاللَّهُ لاَ يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ

23. In order that you may not grieve at the things that you fail to achieve, nor rejoice at what has been given to you. And Allah likes not prideful boasters.

Now let us turn to the philosophy of preordination of such afflictions in the Preserved Tablet as reflected in the Holy Qur'an:

"[***You are afflicted with such calamities such that***] ***you may not regret the things that you fail to achieve, nor rejoice at what has been granted to you."***

The twain brief clauses actually present a solution to one of the sophisticated issues of the philosophy of

creation. Man faces unpleasant entanglements and problems in the world of existence and many a time raises the question as per which what are the reasons lying behind such excruciating calamities when God Almighty is Most Gracious, Most Merciful, and Most Compassionate?

Such calamities aims at warning man that he should not be attached to mundane possessions and glories, since the world is but a passageway or a bridge by which you are not supposed to be allured.

You are not supposed to regard it to be everlasting, since such attachment is the bitterest foe to your happiness as it makes you forget God Almighty and impedes your path toward development. Such afflictions serve as sirens alerting the neglectful and whips struck upon dormant souls. They symbolize intransience of the world.

The point is that worldly possessions allure men and make them forget God Almighty. They wake up when the caravan has departed for long and they are abandoned in the desert.

Thus, God Almighty preordained afflictions and vicissitudes such that human soul may ascend to such elevated states that he may not be affected by pleasant and unpleasant occurrences.

After the occurrences in Karbala', Zaynab (as) said:

"I did not notice but pleasant occurrences preordained by God Almighty."[12]

It is narrated that in his last moments in the battlefield, Imam Husayn (as) said:

"O Lord! I am satisfied with Your Satisfaction and I am patient in Your afflictions."[13]

Imam 'Ali (as) likened his eagerness to martyrdom to that of the infant to its mother's breast.[14] If man becomes aware the reasons lying behind afflictions, he will not be envious, avaricious, wrathful, and hateful, since he knows that all afflictions have been wisely preordained.

If we know that Divine Bounties entail obligations, we will not rejoice at them and if we know that we have to compensate for them on the Day of Resurrection, we will not regret at losing them. The blessed Verse ends by saying that God Almighty does not favor the vain. The Arabic words mukhtal and fakhur denote arrogant and boastful respectively.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 24

الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

24. Those who are misers and enjoin people to miserliness. And whosoever turns away from expending in His Cause and giving loans, then Allah is Rich, Worthy of all praise.

The blessed Verse in question elaborates on the aforesaid points and depicts the vain arrogant, saying:

"Those who are misers and enjoin people to miserliness."

Severe attachment to mundane possessions requires arrogance and vanity which in turn require miserliness and enjoining others to the same. Such people are miserly since they regard mundane possessions as the means of arrogance and vanity.

They do not intend to lose them. But enjoining others to miserliness is owing to the fact that if others happen to be generous, they will be disgraced. Secondly, since they favor miserliness, they enjoin something by which they are enamored. God Almighty emphatically enjoins others to expend in His Cause and refrain from miserliness. Such encouragement does not stem from the need of His Pure Essence.

The blessed Verse ends by saying:

"And whosoever turns away from expending in His Cause and giving loans, then Allah is Rich, Worthy of all praise."

He is needless but all need Him, since He is the Origin of all things. He is also Worthy of all praise, since He encompasses all Perfect Attributes.

Although

"miserliness"

(bukhl) mainly reflects miserliness in expending possessions, but the semantic range is broader such that it includes miserliness in imparting knowledge, acting upon obligations, and the like.

In this vein, mention will be made of some traditions.

Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

"Do not consult with the miserly."[15]

Once circumambulating at night, Imam Sadiq (as) thus invoked God Almighty:

"O Lord! Keep me from miserliness."[16]

The Noble Prophet (S) said:

"The true miser is one who hears my name but refrains from saluting me."[17]

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali (as) said:

"Glancing at the miserly and associating with them hardens man's heart."[18]

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"Miserliness is the attire of poverty and destitution."[19]

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

The miserly are humiliated among their friends and beloved ones."[20]

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"The best of you are your generous and chivalrous people and the worst of you are the miserly. Beneficence toward brethren and making efforts to meet their demands reflect pure faith."

Imam Ridha (as) said:

"The miserly are remote from God Almighty, Paradise, and people."[21]

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 25

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

25. Verily, We have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs and sent with them the Scripture and the Balance that mankind may keep up justice. And we brought forth iron wherein is mighty power as well as many benefits for mankind that Allah may test who it is that will help Him and His Messengers in the unseen. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Invincible.

As mentioned in the preceding blessed Verses, racing toward Divine Mercy, Forgiveness, and Paradise requires the leadership of Divinely appointed leaders, the blessed and most significant Verse in question treats the same and precisely elucidates the goal behind sending the Prophets and their Prophetic calls, saying:

"We sent down Our Messengers with clear proofs and sent with them the Scripture and the Balance that mankind may keep up justice."

"Clear proofs"

(bayyinat) covers a broad semantic range embracing the miracles and intellectual arguments of Divinely appointed Messengers.

The singular noun 'Book' (kitab) connoting Scriptures reflects the unity of their spirit and truth, although

their contents are further perfected with the passage of time and human development. The word 'Balance' (mizan) denotes the means of weighing but undoubtedly herein connotes its immaterial significance, namely something by which all human deeds may be assayed.

The word balance reflects Divine Commands and Laws thereby a distinction may be made between truth and untruth and good and bad. The Holy Qur'an is the clear proof and the Scripture and it elucidates Divine Laws and Commands. In other words, the Holy Qur'an constitutes three dimensions.

The goal of sending the Prophets, such great men, with such perfect equipment, is to keep up equity and justice.

It is worthy of note that the clause:

"that mankind may keep up justice"

reflects moves on the part of mankind rather than the Prophets making people keep up justice.

In other words, the blessed Verse is saying that people must grow such that they keep up justice themselves. Nonetheless, despite the exalted state of ethics, belief, and fear of God Almighty in any society, there are still people who disobey to God Almighty and stand in the way of keeping up equity and justice.

Thus, the blessed Verse proceeds to say:

"And we brought forth iron wherein is mighty power as well as many benefits for mankind that Allah may test who it is that will help Him and His Messengers in the unseen. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Invincible."

Thus, the three means of Divinely appointed Messengers may lead to their final goal when supported by the guarantee of making use of iron and its mighty power."

However, some maintain that the expression

"We have sent down"

reflects the alien origin of iron, but the fact is that such expressions connote the bounties bestowed from higher to lower levels and since all resources are with God Almighty and He created iron for different benefits of it, the expression:

"We have sent down"

is used herein.

In this vein, it is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as):

"Sending down connotes its creation."[22]

It is worthy of note that the Arabic word ba's denotes severity, intensity, power, and might and it connotes war and struggle as well. Thus, some Qur'an exegetes maintain that it signifies military equipment employed for invasion and defense.

Thus, it is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) that the word in question connotes weaponry and other things.[23] Such instances clearly reflect its applicability. The word 'benefits' (manafi') reflects any use made by man of iron.

We know that iron makes many a contribution in human life and its discovery made a new epoch in the history of mankind knows as the Iron Age.

The discovery altered all spheres of human life reflected in the dimensions of the word 'benefits' in the blessed Verse in question that also refers to another goal behind sending the Prophets and sending down Scriptures and the creation of certain means like iron, saying that God Almighty sent them to know who assist Him and His Messengers in the Unseen.

Divine Omniscience herein reflects the objective actualization of His Knowledge, namely it reveals that who will rise to render support to God Almighty and His religion and thus rise toward the upkeep of equity and justice and who will refrain from acting upon such great obligation. Thus, one of the main goals is to test mankind and screen and purify them.

"Assisting God Almighty undoubtedly reflects support His religion and Messengers and propagation of truth, equity, and justice, although God Almighty is in need of no one but all beings are in need of Him.

Thus, the blessed Verse ends with:

"Indeed Allah is All-Mighty, All-Invincible."

He may turn the entire world upside down in one single moment and cause the perdition of all enemies and the triumph of His friends. However, the main goal of sending down the Messengers is the growth and development of mankind, thus they are called to assist the religion of truth.

Thus, it is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S):

"Only swords may make people rise and swords are the keys to Paradise and Hell."

Thus, Divinely appointed leaders hold the Scripture in one hand and the sword in the other. They begin with calling people to truth and justice by logical arguments, but if they fail to acknowledge the truth, they have to use force to make them believe.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 26

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ فَمِنْهُم مُّهْتَدٍ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

26. And verily, We sent Noah and Abraham and placed in their offspring Prophethood and Scripture. And among them there are some who are guided; but many of them are sinners.

The Prophets were appointed by God Almighty rather than by mankind. The preceding blessed Verse generally treated of sending the Prophets, but the blessed Verse in question deal with the Arch-Prophets, beginning with Noah and Abraham (as) and the Arch-Prophets, saying that God Almighty vested Prophethood and Scriptures with their offspring; nonetheless, all their offspring failed to benefit from such great heritage and Bounties. Some of them found Divine Guidance in their light, but many of them were faithless, corrupt, and disobedient to Allah.

Prophethood began with Noah (as) and it was passed down to Abraham (as) and other Arch-Prophets. Then, it was passed down to some of their offspring. However, a limited number benefited from the Light of Guidance, but the majority of mankind went astray.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 27

ثُمَّ قَفَّيْنَا عَلَى آثَارِهِم بِرُسُلِنَا وَقَفَّيْنَا بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنجِيلَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاء رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا فَآتَيْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

27. Then, We sent after them Our Messengers and We sent Jesus, son of Mary (as), and gave him the Gospel. And We ordained in the hearts of those who followed him compassion and mercy. But the monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them, but they only aimed at pleasing Allah, but they did not observe it with the right observance. Therefore, We gave those among them who believed their reward; but many of them are disobedient to Allah.

The blessed Verse treats of sending the Prophets in succession by God Almighty for guiding mankind and sending Scriptures upon them such that God Almighty has provided mankind with Guidance imparted to them through His Messengers.

He also appointed Jesus, son of Mary (as), to Prophethood and sent down the Gospel unto him and made the hearts of his adherents merciful and compassionate. The compassion of Jesus' (as) people was like that of our Noble Prophet, Muhammad (S), such that concerning his companions, the Noble Prophet (S) said that there had been compassionate people among them.

Jesus' (as) people were so compassionate that if they were boxed in the ear, they not only did not take vengeance but also they turned the other side of their faces.

Today, Christians claim the same attitude and take pride in it but we notice that they cause the destruction of millions or billions of people by inventing weapons of mass destruction for their expansionist policies and they are even prepared to cause the destruction of their co-religionists.

"But the monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them, but they only aimed at pleasing Allah, but they did not observe it with the right observance."

The Arabic word ruhbaniyya

(***"monasticism"***)

is cognate with ruhban ("monastic, monk").

The latter, cognate with ruhba

(***"fear"***)

is applied to someone who is most pious, ascetic, and God fearing. The word designates a Christian monastic living in seclusion for worshipping God, asceticism, and fear of God Almighty.

The blessed Verse is saying that God Almighty did not oblige them to follow monasticism, but they were merely asked to gain Divine Satisfaction. In other words, monasticism was not in the Christian doctrine, but Christians innovated it later on.

Early monasticism was rather moderate, but it turned toward deviation, error, and corruption and it was misused to ensnare people. Thus, monasteries were turned into centers of corruption and abnormalities penetrated into the Christian faith.

Therefore, the blessed Verse is saying that their goal was set upon Divine Satisfaction, but they failed to observe it duly and appropriately. Thus, God Almighty rewarded those who believed, but the majority of them were disobedient and sinners.

It is owing to the same reason that monasticism has been severely criticized and condemned by the Islamic faith and the well-known tradition:

"There is no monasticism in Islam"

is mentioned in numerous Islamic sources.[24]

In his exegetic work titled Majma' al-Bayan, Tabarsi narrates from Ibn Mas'ud that once he was mounted beside the Noble Prophet (S) when the latter asked:

"Do you know what was the origin of Christian monasticism?"

He replied:

"God Almighty and His Messenger know better."

He said:

"after Jesus (as), the disobedient and tyrants manifestly committed sins and disobeyed Divine Commands and believers could not tolerate their disobedience. Thus, Christian believers waged three wars with them and many monotheists fell in battles and few of them survived.

They said that if they waged further wars with them, all monotheists would fall and thought it would be better to leave the world to them and each of them live a life of seclusion and devotion in caves until Muhammad promised by Jesus (as) would arrive.

They had been leading a monastic life until I was appointed to the Prophetic call. Some of them believed in me, acknowledged my Prophethood, followed my injunctions, and were rewarded, but some of them failed to believe and perished."

Then, the Noble Prophet added:

"O Ibn Mas'ud! Do you know where the monasticism of my community lies?"

I replied:

"God Almighty and His Messenger know better."

He replied:

"Migration, jihad in Allah's Cause, establishing prayers, fasting, paying alms tax, obligatory and supererogatory pilgrimage to Mecca, and rendering serves to Muslims."[25]

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 28

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

28. O you who believe! Fear Allah and believe in His Messenger such that He will give you a double portion of His Mercy and He will give you a light by which you shall walk in this world and the Hereafter and He will forgive you. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

The blessed Verse may address the Christians mentioned in the preceding blessed Verse encouraging

them to truly observe monasticism and turning away from the world and believe in the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) after Jesus (as) such that they receive the rewards for believing in Jesus (as) and Muhammad (S).

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet that those Christians who believed in him truly observed monasticism.26 It is worthy of note, however, that the preceding Verse and the one in question may be interpreted independently thereby Muslims may deepen their belief in God Almighty and His Messenger (S).

The phrase:

"a double portion of His Mercy"

(kiflayn min rahmatihi) may connote Divine Light and Divine Forgiveness.

It may also reflect the portions mentioned elsewhere27 in the Holy Qur'an:

"O Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which good."

It is also said that the twain portions are rewards for believing in the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) and former Prophets, since any Muslim is obliged to believe in and respect all former Prophets and their Scriptures.

Finally, pious believers shall be rewarded by Forgiving and absolution of sins, without which no Bounty shall be pleasing to man. In other words, man is supposed to feel secure from Divine torment and then he may find his path through the light of belief and fear of God Almighty and finally receive double portions of Divine Mercy.

It is noteworthy to say that according to the traditions narrated from Ahl al-Bayt (as), the word:

"light"

(nur) in this blessed Verse is applied to the infallible Imam representing Divine Light and followed by people.

Surah al-Hadid - Verse 29

لِئَلَّا يَعْلَمَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَلَّا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِّن فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاء وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

29. So that the people of the Scripture may know that they have no power whatsoever over the Grace of Allah [***and all double privileges and blessings belong to them***] ***and that Grace is in His***

Hand to bestow it on whomsoever He wills. And Allah is the Owner of Great Bounty.

The blessed Chapter opened with glorification of Allah and ends with Divine Grace. It is reflected elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an[28] that those among the People of the Scripture who believe in the Islamic faith shall be rewarded twice (ajrahum marratayn). The same theme is to be found in these blessed Verses.

Addressed to Muslims it is said that if they fear Allah and believe in the Noble Prophet of Islam, they shall also be rewarded twice, such that the people of the Scripture may not imagine that Muslims may not receive double portions of Divine Mercy and such portions solely belongs to them.

Taking into account the blessed Verses including the phrase

"Great Bounty"

(fadhl 'adim), it is elucidated that Great Bounty connotes Guidance, Paradise, Divine Forgiving, Prophethood, Following Divine Satisfaction, and possession of accurate insight and distinction which is not employed for mundane Bounties. All-Wise Allah selects certain people to receive His Grace. Thus, Divine Grace is dependent upon His All-Wise Will rather than our imaginations.

Finally, the blessed Verse in question may be a response to the ambitions and groundless claims of some Jews and Christians claiming that Paradise and Divine Grace solely belong to them and others are deprived of them:

("And they say, 'None shall be admitted to Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian.' These are their own desires. Say [O Muhammad!]: 'Produce your proof if you are truthful.'")[29].

O Lord! All Grace and Mercy are in Your Hand. Do not deprive us of such Great Grace and Mercy.

1. Majma' al-Bayan; Durr al-Manthur.
2. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 78, p. 83.
3. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 9, p. 328.
4. Rawdha Kafi; Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, under the blessed Verse in question.
5. Ikmal al-Din; Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, under the blessed Verse in question.
6. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 78, p. 308.
7. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan; Tafsir Safi; Tafsir Burhan, under the blessed Verse in question.
8. 42:30
9. 42
10. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, p. 247; 'Ali ibn Ibrahim's Tafsir.
11. Tafsir Nur.
12. Sayyid ibn Tawus' Luhuf.
13. Luhuf and Maqatil sources.
14. Nahj al-Balagha, sermon no. 5.
15. Nahj al-Balagha, epistle no. 53.
16. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 70, p. 301.

17. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 73.

18. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 75, p. 53.

19. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 74, p. 238.

20. Ghurar al-Hikam, vol. 1, p. 53.

21. Safinat al-Bihar, under s-kh-y.

22. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn.

23. Ibid.

24. Majma‘ al-Bahrayn, under r-h-b; Ibn Athir's al-Nihaya.

25. Tafsir Majma‘ al-Bayan; Tafsir Safi; Tafsir Makhzan al-‘Irfan; all under the blessed Verse in question.

26. Tafsir Majma‘ al-Bayan.

27. 2:201

28. 28:54

29. 2:111

Source URL: https://www.al-islam.org/enlightening-commentary-light-holy-quran-vol-17#comment-0

Links

[1] https://www.al-islam.org/organization/imam-ali-foundation

[2] https://www.al-islam.org/printpdf/book/export/html/29731

[3] https://www.al-islam.org/printepub/book/export/html/29731

[4] https://www.al-islam.org/printmobi/book/export/html/29731

[5] https://www.al-islam.org/person/sayyid-abbas-sadr-ameli

[6] https://www.al-islam.org/tags/tafsir